

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District
Other names/site number: 24JF1888, 24JF2026, 24JF2032, 24JF2033, Morrison Cave National
Monument
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: Lewis and Clark Caverns Road
City or town: LaHood State: MT County: Jefferson
Not For Publication: Vicinity: X

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national x statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A B x C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

**State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government**

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: ☐
 Public – Local ☐
 Public – State ☒
 Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) ☐
 District ☒
 Site ☐
 Structure ☐
 Object ☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>		sites
<u>9</u>		structures
		objects
<u>15</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE:Outdoor Recreation**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE:Outdoor Recreation

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Rustic**Materials:**

Principal exterior materials of the property:

STONE, WOOD: Weatherboard, shingle, log, METAL: Steel

Narrative Description Summary Paragraph

Lewis and Clark Caverns is the main attraction within Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park, which takes in over 3,000 acres and an elevation change of almost 1,600 vertical feet on Cave Mountain in southern Jefferson County, Montana. Cave Mountain rises 5,900 feet above sea level and the entrance to the caverns opens midway up the mountain at an elevation of 5,600 feet, just above the head of Greer Gulch, a steeply incised drainage on the north side of the Jefferson River canyon, which winds its way up the mountain's southern face.

The caves, which run 326 feet deep, are located in the Mission Canyon limestone formation, a karst landscape within the 350-million year old Madison Limestone formation, a formation that extends through Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota and on north into the Canadian provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Lewis and Clark Caverns are located in the London Hills, a series of foothills on the northern perimeter of the Tobacco Root Range. Madison Limestone is a sedimentary formation primarily from the Precambrian era. Highly porous and fossilized, this limestone contains caverns and karst features, including the spectacular Lewis and Clark Caverns. The caverns are composed of a series of twisting passageways which open into large chambers containing "the best developed speleothems in the entire northwest."¹ There are over 3,600 linear feet within the caverns, with the longest passageway extending about 1,200 feet long. Within the park is a 10-mile trail system that climbs along Greer Gulch to the caverns, gaining almost 1,300 feet as it reaches the caverns entrance passage.

The Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District roughly follows the state park road built by the CCC in 1935 up Greer Gulch, and encompasses the roadway itself (including a bridge and three culverts), a picnic area, campground and latrine along the roadway, and the rustic Headquarters Building at the top of the road, along with the trails to the caverns and the improvements within that opened them to public visitation. A concessions building constructed in 1947 finishes out the period of significant historical improvements within the district.

¹ Newell P. Campbell "Caves of Montana", *Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology Bulletin* 105 (Butte: Montana College of Mineral Science and Technology, 1978), p. 111 as quoted by Rossillon and McCormick, Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park Entrance Building and Maintenance Shed Inventory and National Register Evaluations 2007, p. 1; Peterson, James *Stratigraphy and Sedimentary Facies of the Madison Limestone and Associated Rocks in Parts of Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming*. U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 1273-A, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington DC, 1984.

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Narrative Description

Located on Cave Mountain, the Lewis and Clark Caverns are reached by a park access road built in 1935-1938 by the Civilian Conservation Corps that leads north from MT Hwy 2 up the mountain. An impressive effort in its day, the design and construction of the 3.2-mile roadway up a rugged mountainside involved three major curves to gain more than 1,000 feet in elevation. At the bottom stands a visitor center with campground located across the road; along the way, at 4,950 feet in elevation is a picnic ground and stone latrine, and at 5,200 feet in elevation is an observation point that takes in a stunning view of the Greer Gulch drainage and the Jefferson River Valley beyond. The road terminates in a large semi-circular parking area at the top, where an interpretive headquarter building provides visitors a preview of the geology prior to them heading out for a guided tour of the caverns. Built by some 200 CCC crew members, the construction took three years.

The park's transportation network functioned to bring visitors into the park and orient them, then to provide a route to convey visitors up the mountain. According to original park plans, an A-frame Visitor Center was constructed just within the park boundaries. After a stop at the Center, visitors proceeded up the 3.2-mile road to the Park Headquarters (now the Visitor Center) where they purchased tickets and then took a short three quarter-mile hike to the upper cavern entrance. Upon entering, visitors followed a one-way path through the caverns and emerged via a 538' exit tunnel bored through bedrock limestone.

In 2009, the A-frame visitor center was removed and replaced with a modern new facility. Loss of this building impacted the park's historic integrity but the new building in the same proximity retains the traffic patterning originally envisioned in 1937 by architect Oscar John Ballas.

The proposed Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District encompasses the road system, visitor amenities along it, the core administrative and visitor buildings as well as the 1947 concessions building. The district includes a total of 9 contributing structures, 5 contributing buildings and 1 non-contributing site.

Contributing Resources

Five buildings, 9 structures and 1 site contribute to the Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District:

Buildings: Head Quarters Building, Latrine, Concessions Building, Tram Building, Maintenance Shop

Structures: Caverns Infrastructure, Lewis and Clark Caverns Observation Point Overlook, Lewis and Clark Caverns Upper and Lower Trails, Lewis and Clark Caverns Road, 3 Stone Culverts, Lewis and Clark Caverns Granite Bridge

Site: Lewis and Clark Caverns Roadside Picnic Ground

Lewis and Clark Cavern System

(Feature 1, 1 contributing structure, initial development 1905, improved 1936-1941)

The primary feature of this historic district is the series of caverns for which the park was created. Lewis and Clark Caverns, when first discovered included a known series of 15 caverns. Following a mapping effort in 1935-1936, more than 50 caverns were identified. The caverns are a natural feature of great cultural significance, and exhibit an array of stalactites, stalagmites, clusterites, and flowstone that is wondrous and beautiful. Through this subterranean environment, the primary entrance to the caverns lead to a series of stairs, pathways and connecting tunnels, all improved by the CCC during the 1935-1941 period of their work at the park.

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As the local paper reported at the time, "due to the work of the enrollees the known area of this cave has more than tripled in size, the number of chambers made accessible has grown from fifteen to over fifty. The job included building safe rock stairways, and widening and improving the passageways, and installing lighting within the caverns. Trail development included cutting steps in steep slopes, filling in with gravel around fallen rock, and repair of exiting wooden stairways."² Beyond this work, a 538-foot exit tunnel was bored through limestone, taking 18 months to complete the blasting of trails and tunnels, steps, bridges and ladders along with the installation of a lighting system following the primary routes.³

A map of the twisting caverns system and major improvements is included in supplemental documentation.

Observation Point Overlook

(Feature 2, ca. 1940, one contributing structure)

"The Overlook will be located at the end of the cave trails at the entrance to the cave. After the climb up from the parking Area the visitor will no doubt be in need of a short rest and will want to regain his breath before starting on his adventure underground. The entrance to the cave is fortunate in being located at a point which offers a splendid view out over the mountains and down into the valley. It was therefore thought desirable to make the improvements as shown on this sheet." - Original plans for Lewis and Clark Caverns road.⁴

The overlook serves as a gathering place built at the time at a newly opened entrance to the caverns created by the CCC to better access the interior of the caverns. It is a leveled area with low stone retaining walls of cut limestone encompassing the perimeter. A small flight of stone stairs leads down to the overlook.

Cave Trails (Upper and lower hiking trails)

(Features 3 and 4, two contributing structures)

Two graveled pedestrian trails lead to and from the caverns. The upper paved trail leads from the headquarters building to the entrance, and the lower graveled trail provides a route for those returning from the caverns tour to the beginning point. Both primarily serve pedestrians; the lower trail is gravel surfaced and wide enough for a small utility ATV to traverse the trail for maintenance and emergencies. The upper trail features a set of beautifully laid stone steps and associated retaining stone wall.

Lewis and Clark Caverns Road

(Feature 15, 1935-41, one contributing structure)

Completion of the roadway was a multi-year effort, employing 210 CCC crew workers laboring for an estimated 56,000 man-days during its construction in 1935-1941. The original plans called for a two lane "scenic gravel surfaced road constructed on a gravel base."⁵ The road measures 25 feet across, and the original gravel surface was paved in the ensuing years. It currently is chip-sealed asphalt with road lines painted down the center. There are no shoulders, although the original built-up gravel continues to

² National Park Service, Master Plan for Morrison Caves, 1937. On file with Montana State Parks, Helena, MT.

³ O. John Ballas interview, as summarized by Stephanie Gibert, May 20, 1979.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ National Park Service Master Plan for Morrison Caves, 1937. On file with Montana State Parks, Helena, MT.

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serve as the road bed, visible along pavement edges as the road climbs, with as much as a 9% grade, to the upper parking lot.

Initial work on the roadway was carried out with tedious pick and shovel work, supplemented by jackhammers. The pace picked up with the acquisition of a power shovel from a discontinued CCC camp, and then the deployment of a new D-4 bulldozer along with skilled powder men to blast large rocks. As CCC-project director Walter Rankin later remembered:

Four drainage structures were required in the bottom of Greer Canyon where the road crossed the stream bed. Three were large multi-plate culverts with stone headwalls and one was a handsome granite bridge for which a stone mason was hired under the LEM [local experienced man] program. The rock for the bridge was quarried by our men occupying a spike camp we had located on the pass between Whitehall and Boulder. A stiff-leg derrick was leased from a discontinued quarry operation at Butte for handling the boulders as they were turned and shaped to building blocks then loaded on our trucks for transporting forty miles to the bridge site. A similar but smaller portable derrick was built by our blacksmith, Abe Brown, to place the rock on the bridge.”⁶

All of these features remain in place and have not been altered from the time of construction. They are each individually recorded and described in this nomination.

Lewis and Clark Caverns Headquarters Building

(Feature 6, 24JF2033, 1938, one contributing building)

The Lewis and Clark Caverns Headquarters (now the Visitor’s Center) is a one-story building built in the Rustic Style popularized in national and state parks during the 1920s and 1930s. Designed by John Ballas, an architect hired by the National Park Service for the CCC project at the caverns, the headquarters fully embraces the vocabulary of the period, during which building and landscape architects established a consistency to design in national parks that was then adopted by other federal agencies, especially the USDA Forest Service, and in state and county parks across the country.

The headquarters incorporates a horizontal rectangular form with a large projecting porch, all set under a cross-gable roof with clipped gable ends and cedar shakes. Massive piers constructed of native limestone support this roof and frame the entrance, the walkway and porch openings. Together with the battered stone foundation and heavy stone chimney, this naturalistic masonry forms a major element of the design along with the exposed rough-hewn log posts and scissor trusses. Lichen-encrusted limestone, specifically collected on Cave Mountain by CCC crews for this building, is painted a soft cream color with dark brown trim, all of which give the building a distinctive hand-crafted quality that fits beautifully against the backdrop of rugged limestone outcroppings and ridgelines of Cave Mountain.

From the south, visitors approach the entrance to the building and the trail to the caverns beyond, up a short flight of flagstone steps set between two large limestone piers. The porch covers the entrance and ticket window on the southwest side of the building, and provides an open air waiting area projecting out in front of the building. Stone benches are built into each sidewall of the porch, and set beneath curving openings that frame views of the mountainous surroundings.

A pair of multi-pane glass doors open into the primary visitor space, a single large open room that houses displays about the caverns, and a ticketing counter. A window in the southwest wall of this room

⁶Walter Rankin, transcript of oral history w Ken Karsmizki, April 11-12, 1983, p 2.

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opens to the porch, originally for ticket sales, and now dispensing information, during warm weather. The wooden room furnishings center around a stone fireplace in the rear wall to warm the interior. This limestone structure includes a rough-hewn wood mantle, and a stone bench alongside the fireplace, as well as an ornamental steel ventilation grate. The walls are finished with rough wood boards in accordance with the original plans that specified that "all lumber on inside and outside shall have rough finished effect."⁷ The room is open to the ceiling, exposing the scissor trusses, rafters and tongue-in-groove sheathing, all painted in the cream and brown palette of the exterior. The floor is formed of poured and smooth-finished gray concrete.

To the northwest, the building also originally housed restrooms for men and women, with separate exterior entrance doors. This space was converted in 1996, into a larger office space for park management, and a room for an interpretive display that simulates the geological formations within the caverns. A large opening was cut into the northwest wall to accommodate visitor flow into this part of the building, and the counter was altered – deepening and enlarging the counter area in the west corner of the room while eliminating a portion of the counter that ran along the northwest wall.

Beneath the eaves, the purlins project at the gable ends and rafter tails are exposed. The exterior is clad with vertical 1"x10" boards, ribbed by vertical grooves between boards. The cedar shakes are 24" in length, with every fourth course doubled, adding a shadow detail to the roof. In addition to the French doors, pairs of multi-pane casement windows on three walls illuminate the interior; on the northwest is a band of three 4-pane window units running beneath the gable.

On the northwest, the ground slopes to reveal a basement level which holds a storage room accessed by a heavy wooden door, and lit by a six-pane fixed window. Both openings sit deep into the thick stone masonry that supports the building.

Once tickets have been purchased, visitors can access the caverns, via a trail that begins out the northwest side of the porch and then traces its way roughly three quarters of a mile to the cavern entrance. Completing the complex at the top of the road across the parking area, stands a concession building (described below) built in the early 1940s to complement the headquarters building. It too is painted in shades of cream and dark brown, and features some of the same design elements -- long and low, with a shingle-covered gable roof and exposed truss-work framing the entrances.

Lewis and Clark Caverns Concessions Building

(Feature 7, 1947, one contributing building)

The final historic building constructed atop the park road was a concession building, completed in 1947. The building was proposed by Elmer and Louis Link, principals of the prominent Billings architectural firm J.G. Link & Co. Both sons of prolific architect John Gustave Link, Elmer was by then a lead architect and principal with the firm. The proposal for a 25-year contract "to design and build a concession building at their expense that would be compatible to the design of ... headquarters building and when constructed would revert to ownership by the state" met with the approval of Park State Director Walter R. Rankin. Rankin had perceived this need for Morrison Cave State Park and steered the proposal through the state approval process in 1946.⁸

The resulting concessions building was designed by Bert Gewalt, an architect with the Link firm. Louis Link and his wife, Ruth, operated the concessions upon its opening. The 1½-story building was a

⁷ National Park Service, Master Plan for Morrison Caves, 1937. On file with Montana State Parks, Helena, MT.

⁸ Walter Rankin, transcript of oral history w Ken Karsmizki, April 11-12, 1983, p 2-3.

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“practical low cost building notable only in that it did not detract from the effect already established by the headquarters building which could not be duplicated without the large labor pool afforded by the CCC that built it.”⁹

The building complements the visitor’s center (headquarters building) without upstaging the quality and naturalism of the design. A long rectangular building, it is sited far across the parking lot southeast from the headquarters building, against a hillside that frames the site. The concessions building is laid out in a long continuous rectangle, with a gable roof having a cross gable on the southwest end to house a gift shop balanced by a projecting gable entrance on the northeast end that opens into the lunch fountain. The gabled entrance is supported on projecting rough-hewn purlins and supported by wood posts and a cross beam of similar finish. At the northeast end of the building, a breezeway connects the concessions area to a large restroom facility, added in 1965 and expanded in the late 1980s.¹⁰ It too has a front facing cross gable supported on rough-hewn brackets that projects to cover a recessed entryway. This facility is separated into modern men’s and women’s restrooms on either side of the entrance.

The building faces northwest and the primary façade features a row of tall, wood framed 10-light, paired sliding windows that illuminate the lunch fountain within.

The lunch fountain occupies the long axis of the rectangular building with a small grill facing a small open eating area with tables lining the wall. The grill and the gift shop are separated from the eating area by square columns supporting structural beams coved at the top of each column. Vintage pendant lights hang to illuminate the grill area and a wonderful art deco Fountain Lunch sign remains on top of the white-enameled food cooler.

The roofline has a long shed dormer that projects to the rear to create an upstairs living space that served as an apartment for the Links, original owners of the concession, and now for seasonal concessions staff. The building, roofed with wood shingles and clad with board-and-batten siding, sports creamy white paint with dark brown window trim and posts, follows the color patterning of other buildings within the park, and contributing to the uniformity of building improvements of the district.

Tram Operations Building

(Feature 5, ca. 1947, one contributing building)

A concrete tram operations building stands on the steep slope below the caverns entrance, formerly used in conjunction with a tram that accessed the caverns. The east-facing building is a blocky single-story concrete structure with a flat roof, concrete pad, and iron man-door.

Lewis and Clark Caverns Road Granite Bridge

(Feature 9, 24JF2026, 1938, one contributing structure)

The Lewis and Clark Caverns Road Granite Bridge was constructed in 1938 as a primary structure during construction of the 3.2-mile road built by the Civilian Conservation Corps SP-3 crew stationed at LaHood. Designed by National Park Service engineers for construction by the CCC, the stone for the bridge was masterfully cut and fitted together by skilled craftsmen hired from the local community who oversaw CCC laborers.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Helena IR, Jan 26, 1965. Information provided by MT State Parks personnel.

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The bridge is a granite, barrel-vault structure that runs east-west beneath the park roadway, over a small intermittent creek channel in Greer Gulch. Now used as a bicycle and pedestrian path, the creek channel is lined with riparian shrubs and wildflowers, as well as a healthy crop of noxious weeds.

The bridge is constructed of square and rectangular cut gray granite stones, and gray cementitious mortar with 1 inch to 2 inch joints. The structure measures 53 feet 4 inches in length on the longer west side, and 48 feet 4 inches on the shorter east side. On each side, the top courses of stone rise alongside the roadway to form a low retaining safety wall, roughly 16 inches – 18 inches in height. There are 17 stones paralleling the roadway on the west side, and 16 stones on the east side. They measure between 28 inches – 52 inches long and a consistent 16 inches in width across the dressed top, and about 20 inches wide at the mid-point.

The bridge is a beautiful structure, with a sunburst-like single round arch near the center, with 45 inches tall keystones and voissures of alternating long and short lengths spanning the opening. The archway opening measures 132 inches across the base and 64 inches high at center from the baseline (and 70 inches at center to the ground surface, which appears to have compacted over time due to foot and bicycle traffic). Providing passage under the bridge, a barrel vault extends the width of the roadway; it is constructed of rectangular blocks of stone, more stout and massive on the lower courses, and long, narrow rectangular stones that form the structure of the vault. The barrel vault is further enhanced by tool marks that dress the surfaces of the stones.

Latrine

(Feature 8, 24JF2032, 1938, one contributing building)

The Lewis and Clark Caverns CCC Latrine building is a utilitarian structure built in Rustic style that reflects CCC-period construction and elements of Craftsman design. Measuring roughly 11 feet wide by 16 feet long, the building is divided at center into two sides, for use by men on the east and for women on the west. The battered walls are formed of native granitic rock, coated with lichen, and likely locally obtained. These thick walls support a log-framed roof, with stout purlins and rafters of axe-cut logs, peeled and notched into place. The rafter ends apparently projected beyond the drip edge of the roofline originally; they have been cut back beneath the edge of the roof and several ends replaced, undoubtedly to repair rot from exposure to rain and snow. The original rafter ends were sawn off, but two log ends remain alongside the back wall of the building, revealing that they were axe-cut originally and projected a few inches beyond the roof's edge. Three large-diameter purlins project at the gable ends, and here, rather than trimming them back to arrest moisture damage, they are shielded with metal panels on the top side, to protect them from weather.

The building is capped with an off-center gable (saltbox) roof, with a 6/12 pitch on the north side and a more gradual 4/12 pitch on the front (south) side of the building. The roof is decked with 1 inch x 12 inch milled lumber and shingled with 24-inch cedar shingles doubled every three rows for a 7 inch profile. The latrine is ventilated through two louvered window openings on the south side (measuring 30 inches wide x 20 inches high) and by a small ventilator cupola that projects above the latrine's south roof slope. A rock retaining wall forms an alcove that shelters the doorway entrance to each end of the latrine, and a gravel pathway leads to the building from the parking lot below, dividing to access both ends separately.

The latrine reflects the rustic architecture movement promoted by the National Park Service and federal agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, which both issued standardized plans and guidance for improvements in parks and public lands. The battered walls, thick coursed shingles lining the roof, and

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projecting rafter ends on an axe-cut, peeled log structure are all part of the vocabulary of this style of building.

Double Culvert

(Feature 10, one contributing structures)

Three large multi-plate culverts were installed by the CCC to channel water beneath different sections of the roadway. They each feature stone headwalls on both ends. Feature 10 is counted separately from features 11 and 12 due to design differences.

Feature 10, the upper culvert (feature 10), is larger than the others, and features a double culvert pipe designed to allow greater flow capacity. This culvert is more formally designed, with rectangular cut-granite stones laid horizontally for headwalls that frame the openings for paired concrete culvert pipes. The granite used for headwalls on this culvert matches that on the bridge, and was apparently obtained and cut at the granite quarry on Pipestone pass used by the CCC for granite on this road construction.

Single Culverts

(features 11 and 12, 1936, two contributing structures)

Features 11 and 12 are also multiplate culverts installed by the CCC to allow the passage of water beneath the roadway in the park. These two culverts (the middle and lower culverts) are built with headwalls of field limestone gathered nearby and laid in a random pattern with wide mortar joints. Each contains a large-diameter single corrugated steel pipe that carries water under the roadway.

Roadside Picnic Ground

(Feature 13, ca. 1936, one contributing site)

A roadside picnic ground is located along the northeast side of the road, just over a mile from the park entrance. Envisioned from the earliest stages of park development, this picnic area is sited at the location of a natural spring. Parking is provided in a small paved pull-out just large enough for two parking spaces. A series of large rocks prevent cars from driving beyond the pavement, where there is a mowed patch of grass with two picnic tables set into the shade of surrounding native, wild trees.

Maintenance Shop¹¹

(Feature 14, 24JF1888, ca. 1936, one contributing building)

The Maintenance Shop is a rectangular utilitarian building that measures 24' x 120' in length. A pole building with log posts at each of four corners, pole rafters and purlins support a shallow-pitched gable roof, covered with corrugated metal roofing. The building is sided with board-and-batten; like other buildings in the park, it is painted a creamy off-white with dark brown trim.

The building is oriented along the roadway facing southwest. This wall is set with a series of 8 cross-braced, wooden doors on overhead runners, a modern metal garage door, and three fixed six-pane windows at the eastern end. On the southeast side, a man door is offset to the left of center, and a set of three, four-pane fixed windows illuminate the interior. On the rear wall, the windows are now boarded over from inside, they appear to have been two groups of three, likely glazed with 4-panes similar to those on the side.

On the east corner, a 3-foot 6-inch shed-roofed addition appears to have housed an employee latrine. It is roofed with corrugated metal.

¹¹ This description taken from Rossillon and McCormick's Park Entrance Building and Maintenance Shed Inventory and National Register evaluation 2007.

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Non-Contributing Resources**New Maintenance Building**

(Feature 16, 2010, noncontributing building)

A one-story, gable roofed storage building, long and rectangular, clad with brown, raised seam metal siding. The low-pitched gable roof has asphalt shingles on the roof. Metal man-door and windows open under a shed roof overhang, supported on square wooden posts.

Water Pump House

(Feature 17, 1960s, noncontributing building)

A one-story, gable roofed shed, rectangular in form and clad with brown, T-1-11 siding. This recently-constructed building has an asphalt-shingle roof and a metal man door on the north end.

Improvements Outside the Lewis and Clark Caverns National Register District

Immediately south and outside the defined Lewis and Clark Caverns National Register boundary lie a modern campground and a recently-constructed visitors center. The campground contains tent areas, vehicle pull-throughs, picnic shelter, three small log rental cabins, an amphitheater, a day-use area, and a concrete shower house with restrooms, all connected by a graveled and graded access loop road.

Completed at the 75th anniversary of the park's creation, the 2010 Main Visitor Center also lies outside the boundaries for this National Register district. It is a spacious, steel-frame contemporary building with a high vaulted interior under a broad gable roof. The front gable end is clipped and projects over the entrance doorway on brick posts and exposed wood trusses. The interior houses an office for staff, gift shop area, interpretive central space and a meeting room.

Integrity of the Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

The Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District retains a very high level of integrity. Since the main period of construction for this district, 1935-1947, the district displays integrity of setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The gate in the southeast portion of the district serves as the entrance to the park, separating the historic portion of the district from the more-recent development, the modern visitors center and campground, to the south.

North of the entrance gate, little that has been altered since the period of historical significance.

Integrity of design, methods and materials remains very high, with few alterations to the various buildings and structures throughout the park. Because the park was well-designed in its day, there has been little reason to improve or alter the original improvements in the park over the decades since.

Integrity of setting, feeling, location, and association all remains exceptionally strong allowing a visitor to experience the same landscape as when the park opened.

Some changes over time are inevitable, however. Through routine maintenance, the roadway has been repaved, but in all other ways it appears as original – it still follows the original alignment complete with sharp hairpin turns, stone-faced culverts and the impressive granite arch bridge that all remain unchanged. The road system, including the bridge and culverts, is a wonderful example of the high-quality craftsmanship and design engineering executed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in this and thousands of other projects across the United States.

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One loss to the integrity of the historic district was the demolition of the original Visitor Center A-frame building which stood at the entrance, and its replacement with a larger, modern visitor interpretive center in 2010. The new building reads as a 21-century construction and does not contribute to the historic district. Therefore, this building was not included in the proposed historic district boundaries. Completed in the 1980s or 1990s, the campground was not included in the historic district and is soon forgotten as one travels up the roadway to the visitor center.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance1901-1967

Significant Dates1935-1941, 1947

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/BuilderJohn BallasH.J. PostenCarl ForssenJ.G. Link & Co.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District is associated with the development of the caverns as a National Monument and the subsequent transition of the property to the State of Montana to become its first state park. Opened to visitors when parks of national import were being developed throughout the U.S., the history of this park is associated with the history of the emerging parks system nationwide as well as the contributions that public works programs including the Civilian Conservation Corps made in developing many institutions and properties for the benefit of the citizenry of the country.

The buildings and structures built by the CCC for what was then Morrison Cave National Monument provide an excellent example of the craftsmanship by the work crews of the CCC, and in particular Company 574, a talented workforce that brought stability and access to the Lewis and Clark Caverns, and masonry and architectural beauty to the park. As the crew that opened the caverns built the 3.2-mile road up the mountain and constructed the Visitor's Center at the bottom and the Headquarters Building at the top, they left an indelible mark on Montana's first park. For these associations, it is eligible for listing under Criterion A.

While the Headquarters Building stands alone for its design quality and important historical associations, together the Headquarters, Concessions, CCC latrine, road system, bridge, picnic areas and caverns system all comprise a very strong potential historic district that reflects the opening of Lewis and Clark Caverns, Montana's very first state park.

The historic district reflects a period of significance that spans the period when the caverns were first used as a tourist destination (beginning in 1901) and through its time of CCC development and improvement (1935-1941). The period of significance also includes the time of the construction of the Elmer and Louis Link-designed concession building (1947), the final historic building constructed atop the park road, ending in 1967, the fifty-year cutoff. In total, the district contains 5 contributing buildings, 9 contributing structures, 1 contributing site and 2 noncontributing buildings.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The caverns within Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park were first brought to public attention in 1898 by deer hunters Tom Williams and Bert Pannell. Noticing bare ground and steam around a natural vent hole, they investigated and discovered voids beneath the earth hundreds of feet across, filled with geological formations of subterranean beauty. Upon hearing of the discovery, local quarry owner Dan Morrison visited and determined to make the caves into a tourist attraction, enlarging the entrance and building a series of 2,000 wooden steps into the caverns, and publicizing them widely.

Historically, the caverns were alternatively called Limespur Cave and Shoshone Cave but ultimately became the namesake of Morrison; he filed a land claim seeking to establish ownership, only to discover that the property where the cavern entrance was located was on land owned by the Northern Pacific Railway, which refused to relinquish ownership to him. Instead, the railway transferred the caverns to federal ownership under the Antiquities Act of 1906. Two years later, on May 11, 1908, Morrison Cave was designated a National Monument by President Theodore Roosevelt, "to preserve [the great caverns] for the free enjoyment of all people."¹² Three years later, President Howard Taft proclaimed the land set aside to be from then on known as Lewis and Clark Cavern National Monument.

¹² As quoted by Ken Karsmizki, "The Politics of Conservation: Lewis and Clark Caverns, Montana," p.6.

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History of Improvements in the Caverns

Early visitors to the caverns accompanied Dan Morrison into a primitive and undeveloped cavern network. Entrance into the caverns began with a climb down a 50-foot rope and from there wound through the cave chambers with torches to light the way and ropes to assure their safety.¹³

To improve this initial point of entry, Morrison blasted a new entrance into the chamber through the rock near the natural cave opening. From there, visitors to the caverns descended a rickety flight of wooden stairs that Morrison installed ca. 1905, and then progressed through the caverns via narrow natural fissures between the larger chambers.¹⁴

The caverns, though federally recognized, remained relatively inaccessible for three decades, as they were located high up on Cave Mountain with no reliable road access. In fact, throughout the period of federal ownership, they were never officially opened to the general public, although Morrison and others regularly took tour groups into the caverns. During warm months, touring groups regularly arrived by rail from nearby Butte, Montana and then hiked up the mountain to the cave entrance, and following their tour, hiked back down, an all-day experience.

Meanwhile, the National Park Service was established in 1916, and other caverns of greater renown came into the federal system. In 1929, the Montana State Board of Land Commissioners was granted authority to establish state parks and as the federal park service began to consider transferring some of their properties to state and local governments, the Lewis and Clark Caverns National Monument was reevaluated. Leading Montanans, including Senator Burton K. Wheeler, saw great potential in bringing the caverns under state jurisdiction and improving their accessibility, "a mecca" he thought, "for thousands of tourists and of great advantage to the people of Butte, Bozeman, Helena and Livingston."¹⁵

In 1934, Governor Frank Cooney petitioned the federal government to improve access and develop the Lewis and Clark Caverns National Monument for visitors, and a one-year survey of the caverns was conducted resulting in plans by the federal government to develop them for public viewing. A major effort by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was launched, involving improvements within the caverns, and construction of a roadway, buildings and structures within the park.

The CCC was a highly significant component of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, the federal government's broad political, social and economic response to the Great Depression. Among the first of the New Deal programs, the CCC was established in 1933 as a work relief program intended to promote conservation, reforestation, and construction at state parks, national parks and national forests across the nation, expending nearly \$300 million nationwide on state, county and metropolitan park improvement projects during that era. The CCC program participated in the formation of state parks in 22 states during the 1930s, including Montana.¹⁶ Nearly three million young American men served in the CCC, until the program was dissolved in 1942.

CCC Company 574 was primarily responsible for opening the caverns to the public. Originally a traveling company, the group was composed of young men from Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, and first stationed at Havilah, California in 1933. They then moved to Moyie Springs Idaho, and on from there to Keene California. In May 1935, Company 574 moved north to Lower Two Medicine Lake in Glacier National

¹³ Anaconda Standard, "The Wonders of Limespur Cave, Dec 8, 1901.

¹⁴ Ken Karsmizki, CCC Development of Lewis and Clark Caverns, 1981, p.4.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 14.

¹⁶ Conklin, David G. David G. "The Long Road to Riches: The Development of Montana's State Park System" *Montana Outdoors*, Vol. 9 No. 7, 1978.

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Park, FOR fire duty which included a 23-day battle against fire in Waterton Provincial Park which threatened the town of Waterton and the Prince of Wales Hotel.

At the end of the fire season in October 1935, Company 574 moved to LaHood near Whitehall and established Camp Cavern SP-3. Their task, while there, was to improve access to the caverns and prepare them to become a state park. The assignment lasted from 1935 to 1941 and began with clearing away tons of bat guano from the caverns, followed by a one-year exploration of the caverns during which the optimal route for public viewing of the caverns was outlined.

The initial clearing was a major job, aided by a conveyor that carried buckets of rock, dirt, pack rat nests and trash from the caverns. Packrats were trapped and the caverns scrubbed clean. In the process new passages were discovered as the crews made their way deeper into subterranean features. Stalactites and stalagmites blocking the passages were broken out to enable access into newly discovered, major chambers in the formation: the Cathedral, Hell's Half Acre, Lands End, and the Bacon Room.¹⁷

In Spring of 1936, geologist Bruno Petsch trained crew members to participate in compass-guided survey of the caverns leading to the conclusion that the caverns were third largest in the U.S. The project picked up in November 1936, when Walter Rankin was shifted from a project in Havre's Beaver Creek park to take over as Superintendent of Camp SP-3, Whitehall and the Morrison Cave project. Survey of the caverns was headed by Howard Stewart, a mining engineer on staff at Yellowstone National Park. Stewart conducted a transit survey of the extensive set of caverns and passageways to accurately map the caverns and plot a tunnel that would return from the lower level of the caverns to the surface. The work of the crews then moved on to several primary activities: building trails, infrastructure and a 538' exit tunnel within the caverns. Within the caverns, their extensive work was overseen by Junior Foreman William Glancy, an experienced miner from nearby Butte who had previously worked at Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico and Mammoth Cave in Kentucky.¹⁸ The job included building safe rock stairways, and widening and improving the passageways, and installing lighting within the caverns. Trail development included cutting steps in steep slopes, in-filling with gravel around fallen rock, and repair of existing wooden stairways.

Tunnel construction required more skill and was a separate effort, supervised by Junior Forman Jim Mullen. Mullen recruited Butte miner, Art Mullen, who trained the crews and whose mining expertise served the project well. Working by the light of miners carbide lamps, and later electric headlights, Mullen taught the CCC crews to frame the tunnel shaft with timber stulls, and safely drill and blast the rock face to tunnel deep into the mountainside. When it was determined that the Paradise Room was just 500' inside the mountain, the decision was made to open a tunnel that would "provide an easy way out for visitors thereby avoiding the rather tedious climb" back up the 286 steps to the surface. The tunnel also had the advantage to serve as an emergency exit in the event of fire or a passageway being blocked. Tunneling began in the fall of 1938 and was completed the following spring. As the workers neared the Paradise Room, prior to blasting, old tires and other debris were piled up to absorb vibration and prevent damage to the delicate formations in the caverns. As a final feature, concrete walls fitted with metals doors were installed at each end of the tunnel to limit airflow and prevent the caverns from drying out and deteriorating.¹⁹

¹⁷ Ken Karsmizki, CCC Development of Lewis and Clark Caverns, 1981, p. 5-6.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 9-10.

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For the technically-challenging project to design and construct a road up Greer Gulch, Texas native Edwin Axline was assigned to serve as engineer, followed by Warren L. Hersman from Kalispell.²⁰ The 3.2 mile road up the mountain through Greer Gulch included a granite bridge midway up the road, picnic and camping areas, and an observation point. Buildings included a "Head-House Lodge" A-frame visitor center at the entrance to the park (demolished 2009), and the Headquarters Building (now the Visitor Center) atop the road near the cavern entrance,²¹ as well as cabins for park guides, and a stone latrine building. The crews also installed the park's first infrastructure including phone, water and sewer lines through the park.

As the CCC yearbook for 1937 recorded:

"The major work project of the company is the development of Morrison Cave. Due to the work of the enrollees the known area of this cave has more than tripled in size, the number of chambers made accessible has grown from fifteen to over fifty. A new road is being built up to the entrance to the cave, which is 5,593 feet above sea level, and it is expected that, in the near future, Morrison Cave will be on the itinerary of ever tourist vacationing throughout the northwest."²²

In August 1937, the national monument was transferred "to the state of Montana to be used for the purpose of a public park and recreation site," and with this action, Morrison Cave State Park became Montana's first state park. The park was not formally dedicated and opened to the public, however, until May 4, 1941. Despite a driving rain that canceled the festivities, some 3000 people drove the new road to the caverns to be on hand on the official opening day.²³

History of the Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park

With Lewis and Clark Cavern the first park to open under the newly created State Parks program, it is not surprising that the first person recruited to serve as State Parks Director was Walter "Barney" Rankin, who had so ably steered the ambitious CCC caverns project to its successful completion. Rankin had left his post in 1940 to serve in World War II, and after returning, was interested in helping to build a new state parks program. A law authorizing the creation of state parks had been passed by the Montana State Legislature in 1940, but still awaited the planning and administrative capacity, and the funding to acquire and designate state parks and build and manage the new program.

Eager to return to civilian life and take on the state parks challenge, Rankin offered to step into the role of State Parks Director for no paid compensation. His first priority was to further improve the caverns with new lighting and boost the visitor count with guided tours. In addition, during the 1940s, with limited funds, the last of the wooden stairways were replaced with iron and the spiral stairway was removed and replaced with connecting tunnels.²⁴

Visitation to the park was slow early on but increased with passing years, particularly after the improved paving of Highway 10 through the Jefferson River canyon. With the access to the park finally established and the general public increasingly mobile in the age of automotive travel, the park began to take on a role as a local, if not state-wide attraction.

²⁰ Walter R. Rankin. Oral history interview with Ken Karsmizki, April 10-11, 1983, p. 5.

²¹ "Discovery Days" Article on L&C Caverns, *Montana Outdoors*, July/August 1992.

²² CCC Yearbook 1937.

²³ Karsmizki, p. 12, 17.

²⁴ Walter Rankin, transcript of oral history w Ken Karsmizki, April 11-12, 1983, p. 2-3. State Parks Management Plan, 2000, p. 19.

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The numbers of visitors increased and by the mid-1960s, some 35,000 cave-lovers were making their way to Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park. When the Links approached Rankin with a proposal to design and build a concessions building opposite the headquarters, Rankin was in full support having toured a number of national parks from Glacier, Yellowstone and Grand Teton to Zion, Bryce and the Grand Canyon during earlier work on an NPS mapping crew. As he remembered, the concessions operations offered a gathering place and support to visitors, and at the caverns would provide a place for visitors to gather until the next scheduled tour. "Managers and staffs of these concessions were usually well informed about their park and being people-wise they contributed a great deal to the social environment. This condition relieved a lot of pressure on rangers and guides from hoards of visitors."²⁵

Designed and constructed by the architectural firm J.G. Link & Co., the concessions building was funded by the Links, to be operated for 25 years and then revert to ownership by the state. With the contract approved by the state in 1946, the Links set up concessions on the front porch of the Headquarters Building that summer, and by the 1947 season, opened for business in a brand new concessions building, designed and built by their firm, and "stocked and ready for business."²⁶

Louie and Ruth Link proved to be well suited to the task. They split their year between living and working at the concessions building in the summers and wintering in California. The Links operated the Café and Curio shop from 1946 until 1986, while the state operated a train and tram system to transport tourists to the caverns entrance from 1950. The tram closed in 1973 and the train in 1975 due to safety concerns. Ruth Link was known for her overly large burgers, and one of the extra attractions was their pet deer, Rudolph, who developed a fondness for pop, raisins, oats and tea bags along with chewing cigars and cigarettes. He was tame enough to regularly ride around the park as a passenger in the Links' car, much to the delight of visitors.²⁷

In the mid-1960s, the annual visitor count was some 35,000; by 2000 visitation was recorded at 50,000-60,000 annually. That year the state parks master plan took stock of their success in managing Lewis and Clark Caverns, where over time they had developed 17 buildings, 3 miles of paved road, 4 miles of hiking trails and a caverns system that was visitor friendly.²⁸

Architectural & Engineering Significance**CCC Buildings in Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park**

While CCC crews were still stationed at Camp Cavern, the new Montana State Parks and the National Park Service collaborated on improvements in the new park. National Park Service staff continued to issue designs and guide improvements in the park. Architects overseeing the Caverns developments included H.J. Posten and Carl Forssen.²⁹

Survey and construction of the caverns infrastructure was a feat of accomplishment during the mid-1930s era. Exploring the caverns underground with a hand-held transit system was a challenge, and to do so with young men not trained to the task was impressive. Designing the improvements to the walkways, replacing stairways with steps cut into bedrock and iron stairs took much masterful engineering, while tracing and mapping the meandering caverns and connecting them to create a

²⁵ Rankin, oral history w Ken Karsmizki, p. 2-3

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Helena Independent Record, Aug 2, 1953.

²⁸ Helena Independent Record, Nov 23, 1965; FWP Master Plan 2000, p. 18.

²⁹ Rankin, oral history w Ken Karsmizki, p. 2-3

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looping route required skill. While some features were broken away to create walkways, care was taken to preserve as much as possible. Touring the caverns today, it is evident that the great majority of geology and delicate cavern formations remain intact. The final engineering to extend the exit tunnel was successfully plotted to provide a gentle rise exiting the tunnel while bringing minimal damage to the Paradise Room located close to the site of the exit route. In all, a true accomplishment of engineering for that time.

On the building front, architect John Ballas completed the Headquarters Building plans in 1938, along with a design for the stone latrine building in the upper picnic area, and a custodian's residence that would have been located north of Montana Highway 2 (not executed).³⁰

The buildings constructed by the CCC exhibit a high level of craftsmanship, resulting from the practice of having experienced engineers and architects developing building plans and landscape designs, and then hiring master tradesmen from the area to supervise work by the CCC crews. Thus, the masonry, carpentry and roadbuilding skill evident in the CCC project at Lewis and Clark Caverns reflects very high qualities of design and workmanship. All work but the blasting was executed by the CCC crews. Barney Rankin, the CCC superintendent for the Caverns project, when asked about construction of the Headquarters Building, remembered:

"Three Senior Architects had occupied a staff position at various times during my four years on the project. H.J. Poston was there when I arrived followed shortly by Carl Fossen who later resigned to join a partnership in Missoula and John Ballas who designed and supervised construction of the administration building at the end of the park road. The structure combined office, small museum and restrooms for visitors. We determined that the stone for this head house would be lichen covered boulders picked up from the side of Cave Mountain. There were not enough to finish the job so, with the approval of the ranch owner, we opened a quarry and obtained exactly similar rock boulders from a fractured limestone ridge about five miles north of Three Forks adjacent to the Three Forks- Helena Road."³¹

Designed by National Park Service-architect O. John Ballas, the Headquarters Building is an excellent example of Rustic style architecture embraced by the NPS in the day, and reflected in a range of building forms from utility buildings to full-sized visitor centers. As an example of "parkitecture" that followed guidance for design of interpretive buildings designed to welcome and educate visitors, the Lewis and Clark Caverns Headquarters Building is equally significant under Criterion C.

The Headquarters Building is the primary building within the Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District, establishing a rustic park architectural vocabulary that is echoed in the latrine and other masonry constructions, as well as in the Concessions Building.

Rustic Style Design and the National Park Service

The Rustic Style originated in the Western United States as an expression of the blending of the built and the natural environment. In Montana, the influence of such architects as Robert Reamer, Kirtland Cutter, Gilbert Stanley Underwood and Thomas McMahon, who led the movement for Rustic buildings

³⁰ Morrison Cave State Park Master Plan, 1937.

³¹ Walter R. Rankin, Oral History Interview with Ken Karzmiski, p. 2-3.

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in the National Parks, translated well within a region where use of native log and stone was a natural extension of settlement building patterns.

These masterful designers set the standard for design in parks throughout the country, at all levels—national, state and local. During the 1930s, the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service issued extensive guidance on site plans and buildings that fit their settings. Much of this work was based in the Craftsman design ideals of Greene and Greene and others, whose work embraced an emphasis on natural materials, particularly wood and stone, with designs that reflected the surrounding environment.³²

Oscar John Ballas clearly was following in these footsteps in his design for the buildings at the Lewis and Clark Caverns. In fact, the Headquarters Building shares similar patterning with Herbert Meier's Norris Roadside Museum in Yellowstone Park, which Ballas most surely would have been aware of as an architecture student at Montana State University in Bozeman, located just an hour north of Yellowstone. Designed to snugly fit their wild landscape settings, both buildings draw materials heavily from nearby environs and feature a low horizontality with clipped gable rooflines, heavy, rustic battered stone piers, wood shingled roofs, and rough-hewn wood truss framing. In addition, both buildings include a large open-sided spaces that frame spectacular views of the native landscape surrounding them. Ballas' design for the Headquarters is a fitting building for its setting on Cave Mountain and a Montana example of "parkitecture" at its very best.

Lewis and Clark Caverns Today

Eighty years on, the Lewis and Clark Caverns remains one of the "jewels of the Montana State Parks system." The caverns are a natural attraction that draw visitors from throughout Montana and the nation, in 2016 total visitation was over 73,954.³³ Very little has changed within the park, with exceptions already noted; the interior of the park, with its wild setting, caverns, and early 20th century buildings remains relatively unaltered over time. The buildings by the CCC and the Link's concessions building still welcome visitors throughout the year and the caverns remain a geological wonder.

Meanwhile, the wild setting also draws picnickers and campers to primitive and improved campsites, hikers to the 10-miles hiking trails, and mountain bike riders who take advantage of the wide, quiet roadway in the shoulder seasons of the year. Park staff are friendly and proud of the spectacular caverns that they manage, offering educational subterranean tours through the warm months and special holiday candlelight tours during the winter Christmas season. In 2017, the Montana Legislature committed funds to improve lighting in the Caverns, part of the state's ongoing stewardship of this wonderful place.

³² Excellent sources to support this perspective are to be found in Good, Albert H. *Park and Recreational Structures: Part 1 – Administration and Basic Service Facilities*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1938. And Harrison, Laura Soulliere. *Architecture in the Parks National Historic Landmark Theme Study*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, 1986.

³³ Montana State Parks, 2016 Visitation Report

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Not Attributed	Longitudinal Section of Lewis and Clark Cavern, Original from National Archives, in Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park archives collection. (Label indicates date produced c. 1916, but more likely ca. 1936)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☒ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other Name of repository: Montana State Parks

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

A. Latitude: 45.84474	Longitude: -111.86366
B. Latitude: 45.84480	Longitude: -111.85080
C. Latitude: 45.82683	Longitude: -111.85058
D. Latitude: 45.82669	Longitude: -111.86337
E. Latitude: 45.83623	Longitude: -111.86353
F. Latitude: 45.83616	Longitude: -111.86754
G. Latitude: 45.83388	Longitude: -111.87926
H. Latitude: 45.83740	Longitude: -111.87929

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries for the Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District are indicated on the accompanying topographic map.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries for the Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District follow natural features to encompass the historic buildings, roadway and structures in a manner that makes visual and historic sense for this historic visitor attraction.

10. Form Prepared By

name/title: Chere Jiusto
organization: Montana Preservation Alliance
street & number: 120 Reeder's Alley
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59601
e-mail: chere@preservemontana.org
telephone: (406) 457-2822
date: September 2017

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

Name of Property

Jefferson Co., MontanaCounty and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Maps: USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.**Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

The following items are included in this completed form:

Maps: USGS topographic map (7.5 minute series) section indicating the property boundaries
USGS topographic map (7.5 minute series) section delineating historic district features
Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park map

Additional items: Google Earth Satellite View of Historic District Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park
Select Drawings from original Morrison Cave State Park plans, 1937

Photo Log*All Photographs:*

Name of Property: Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

City or Vicinity: LaHood vicinity

County: Jefferson

State: MT

Photographer: Chere Justo

Date Photographed: November 9, 2016-May 26, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

See Continuation Sheets.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior.

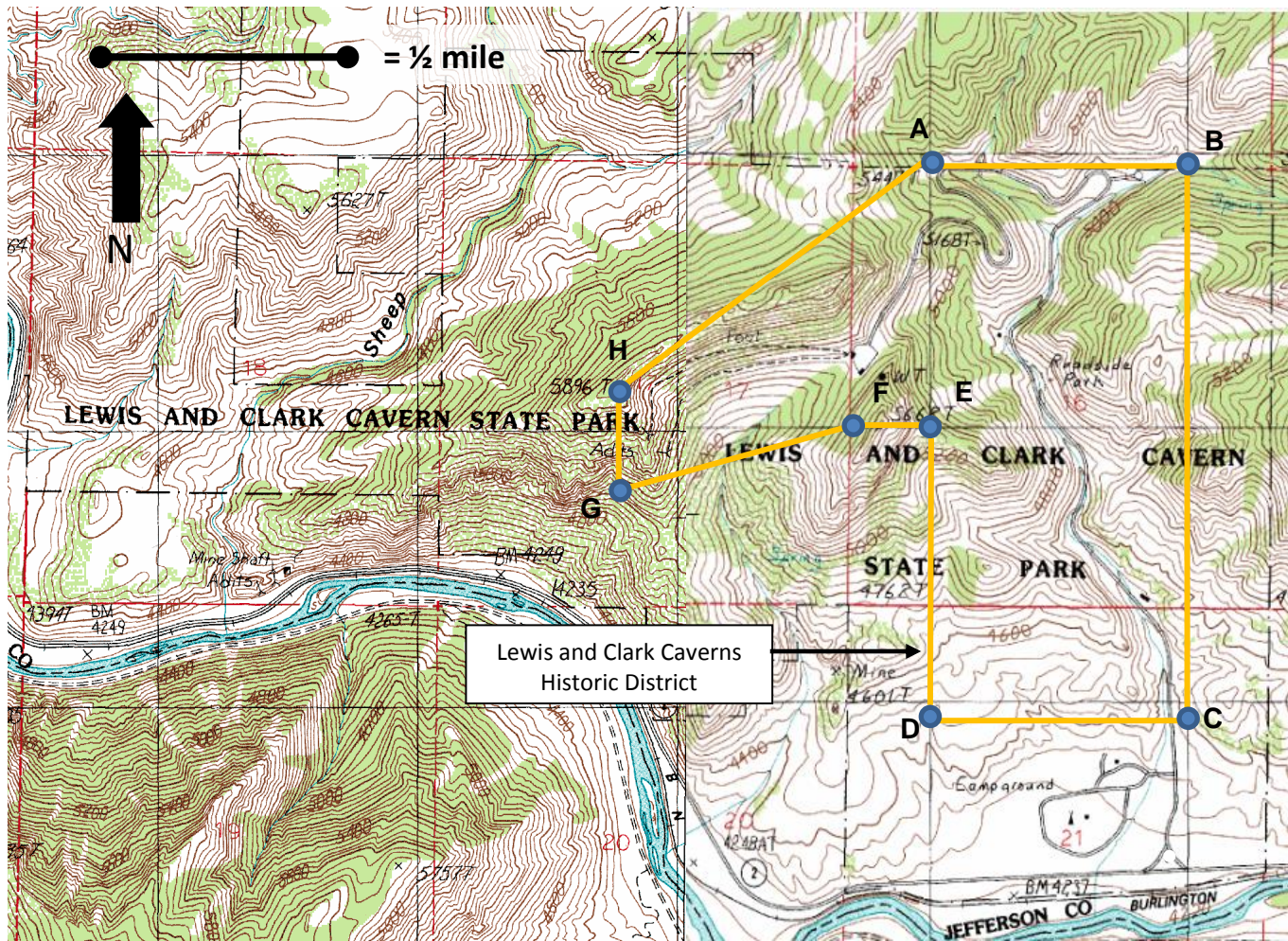
United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

Name of Property

Jefferson Co., Montana

County and State

**Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District.****Found on these USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangles:****Sappington 1987; Jefferson Island 1987.**

The boundary is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the indicated Latitude and Longitude reference points.

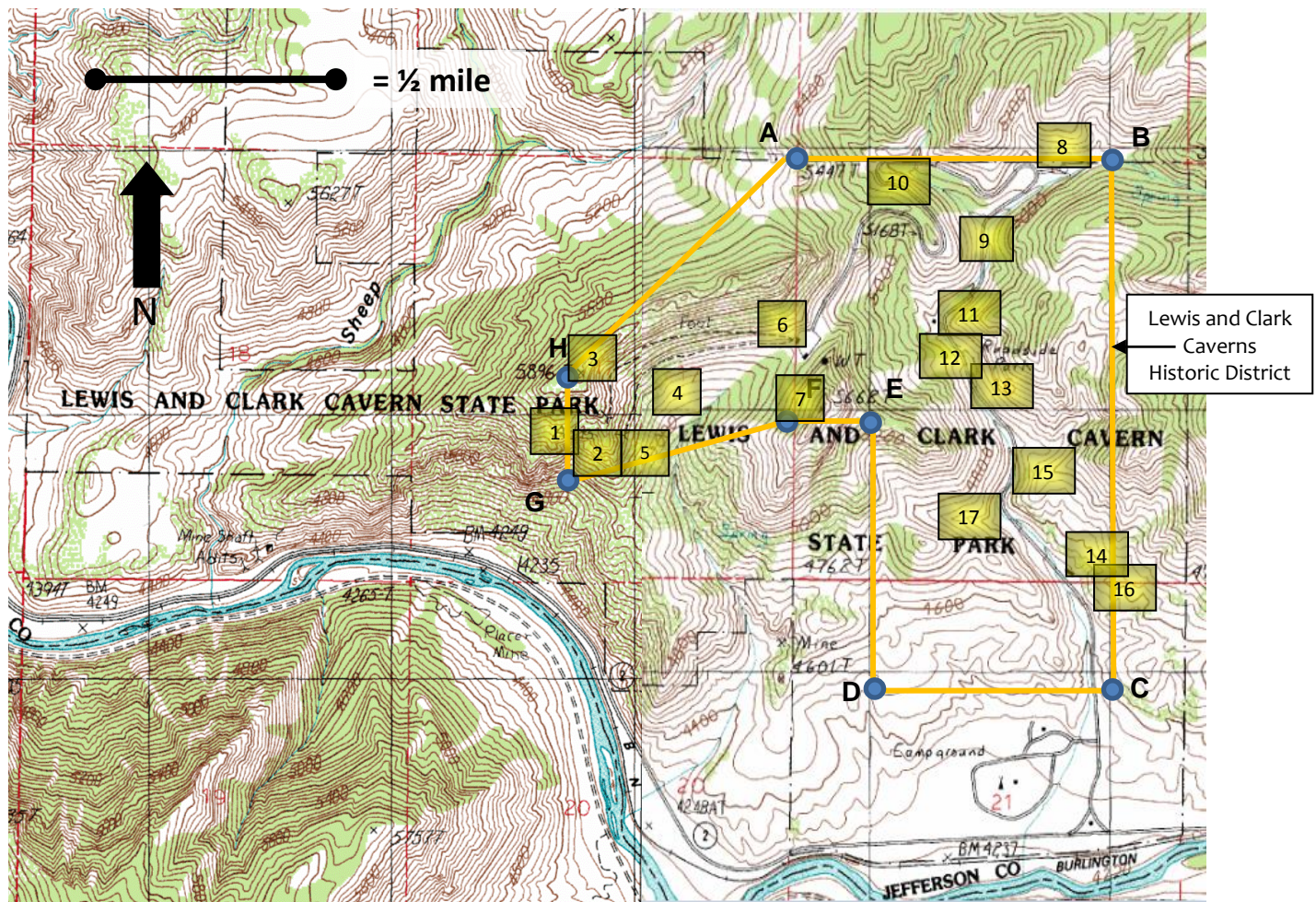
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National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

Name of Property

Jefferson Co., Montana

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**Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District Showing Location of Resources**
 Historic District Boundary
Contributing Resources

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1 L&C Caverns System | 9 Granite Bridge |
| 2 Overlook | 10 Stone Culvert |
| 3 Cave Trail (Upper Hiking Trail) | 11 Stone Culvert |
| 4 Cave Trail (Lower Hiking Trail) | 12 Stone Culvert |
| 5 Tram Operations Bldg | 13 Roadside Picnic Ground |
| 6 Caverns Headquarters (Visitors Bldg) | 14 Maintenance Building |
| 7 Concessions Bldg | 15 L&C Caverns Road |
| 8 Latrine | |

Non Contributing Resources

- 16 New Maintenance Building
- 17 New Utilities Shed

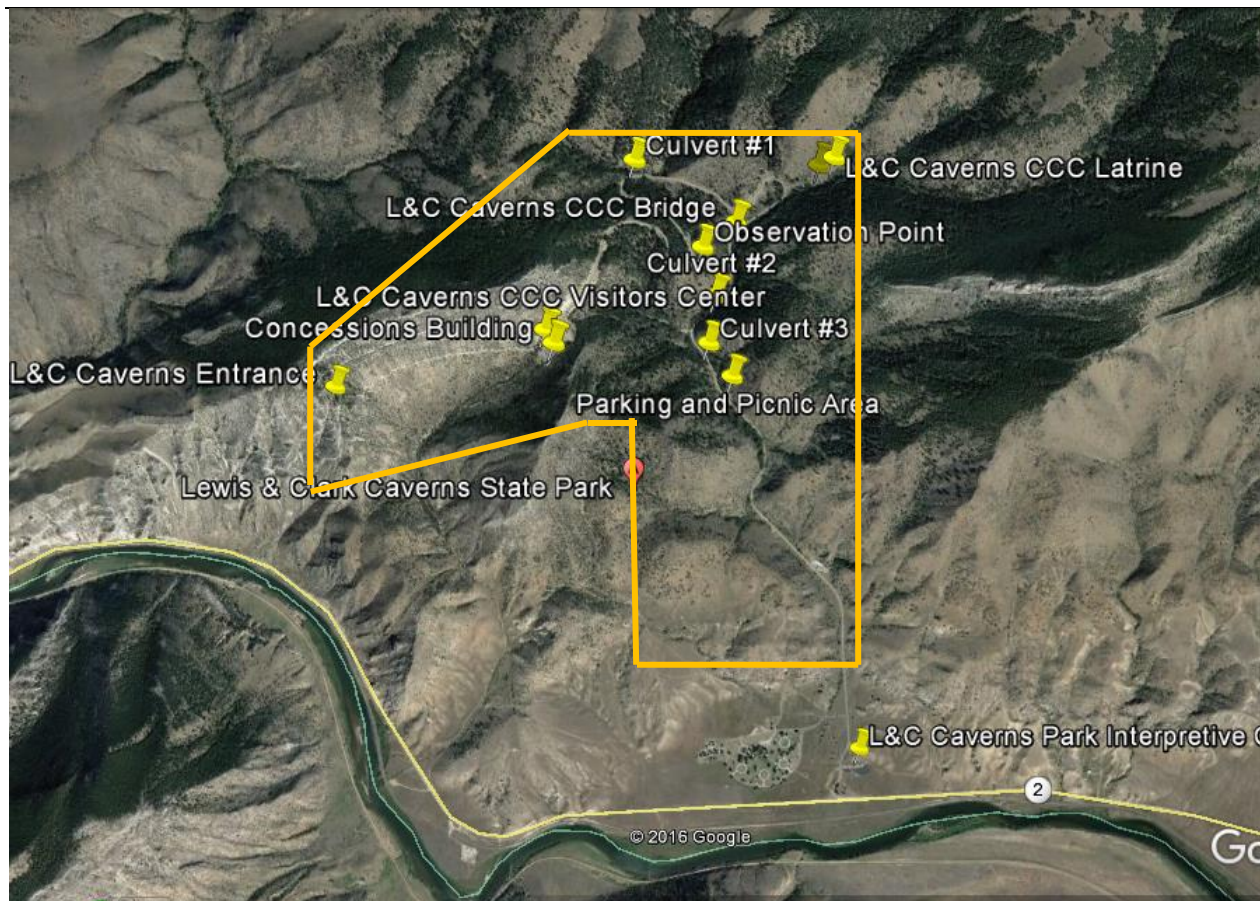
United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

Name of Property

Jefferson Co., Montana

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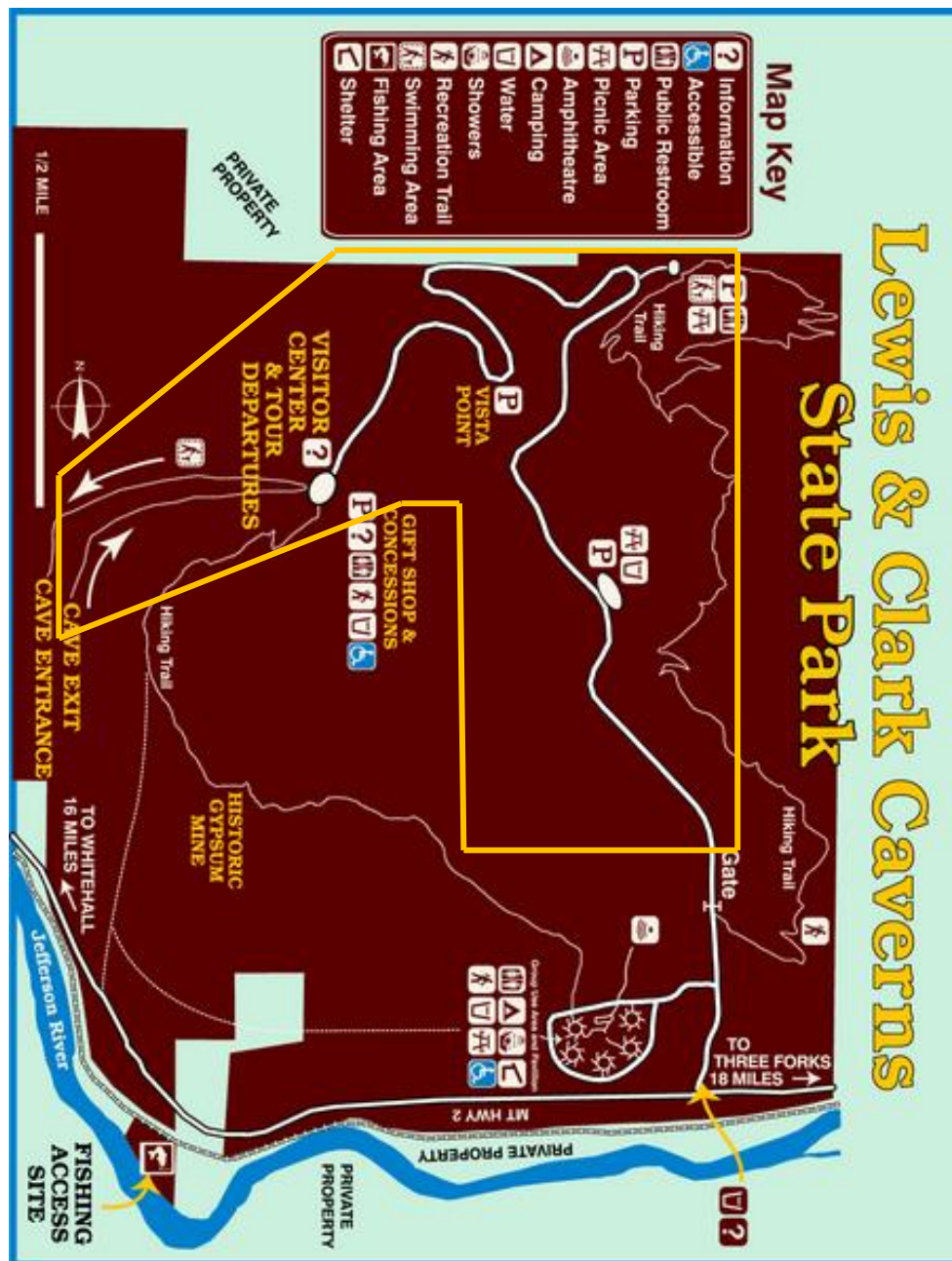
**Lewis and Clark Caverns Historic District, Aerial View - Google Earth Image, 9/4/2014****Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park Map, 2016**

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic DistrictJefferson Co., Montana

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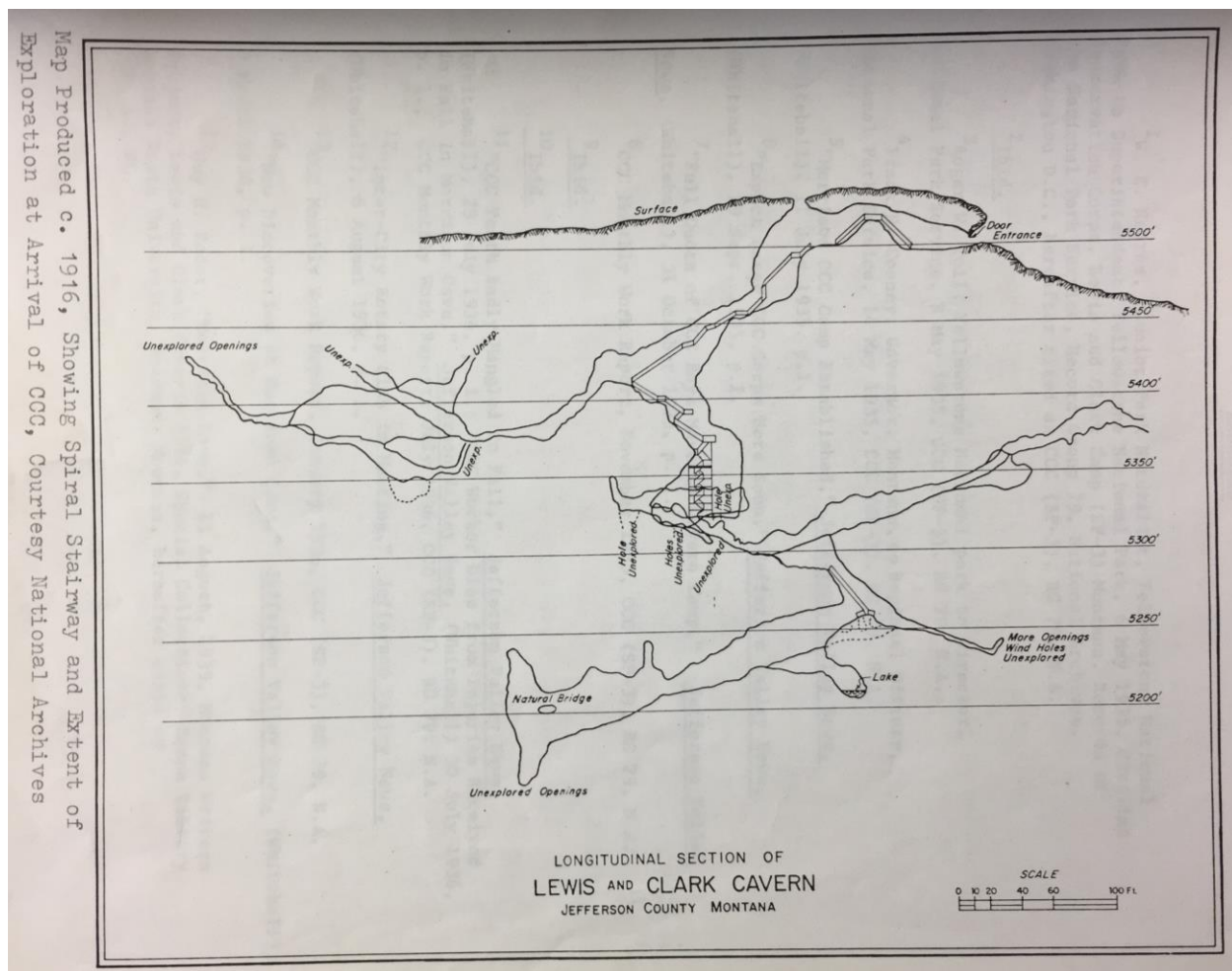
**Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park Map.**Viewable on-line at <http://www.mappery.com/Lewis-and-Clark-Caverns-State-Park-Map>

United States Department of the Interior

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**Map Showing Spiral Stairway and Extent of Exploration at Arrival of CCC,
Original from National Archives, in Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park archives collections
(Label indicates date of Produced c. 1916, but more likely ca. 1936)**

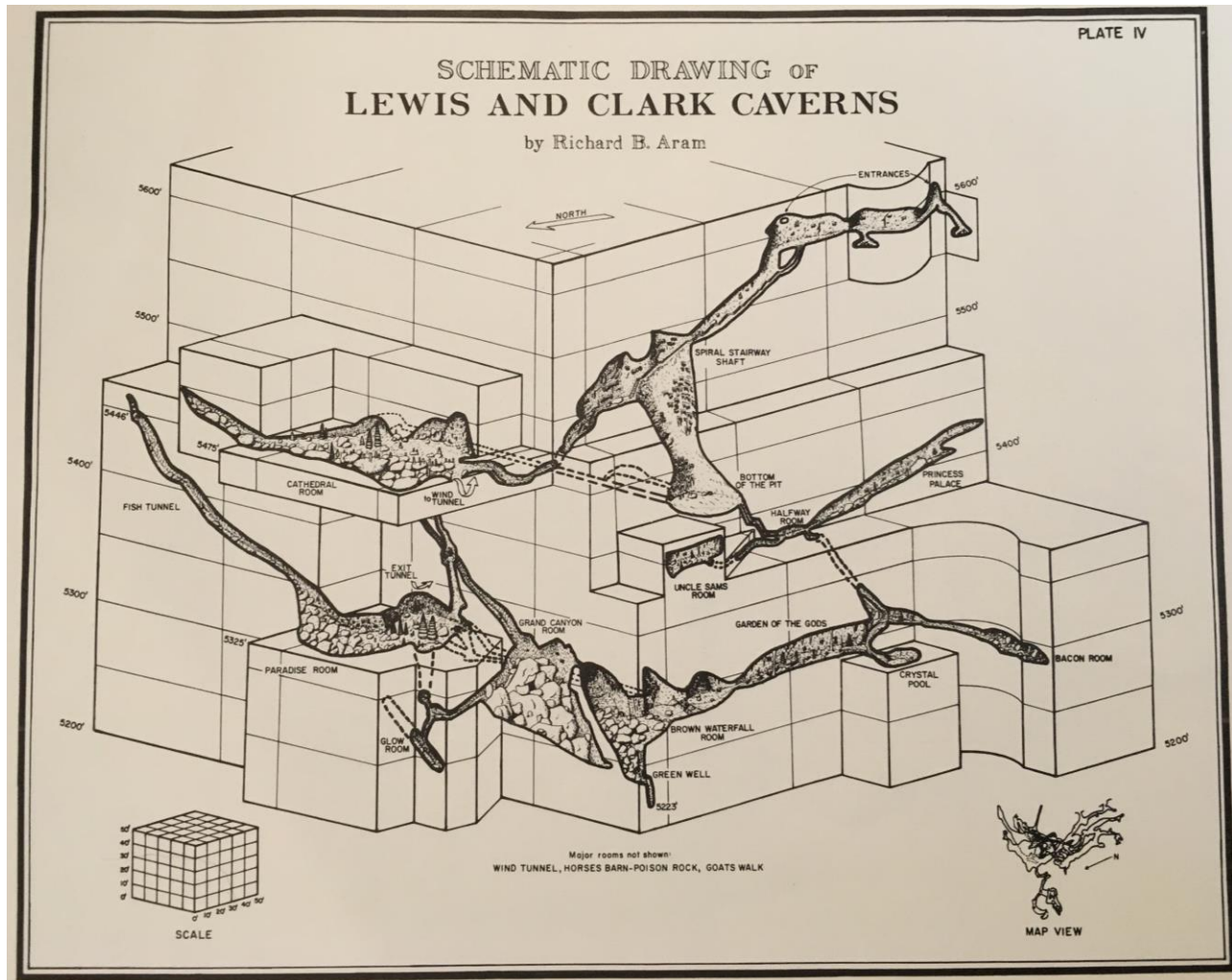
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**Schematic Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park Map, 2016**

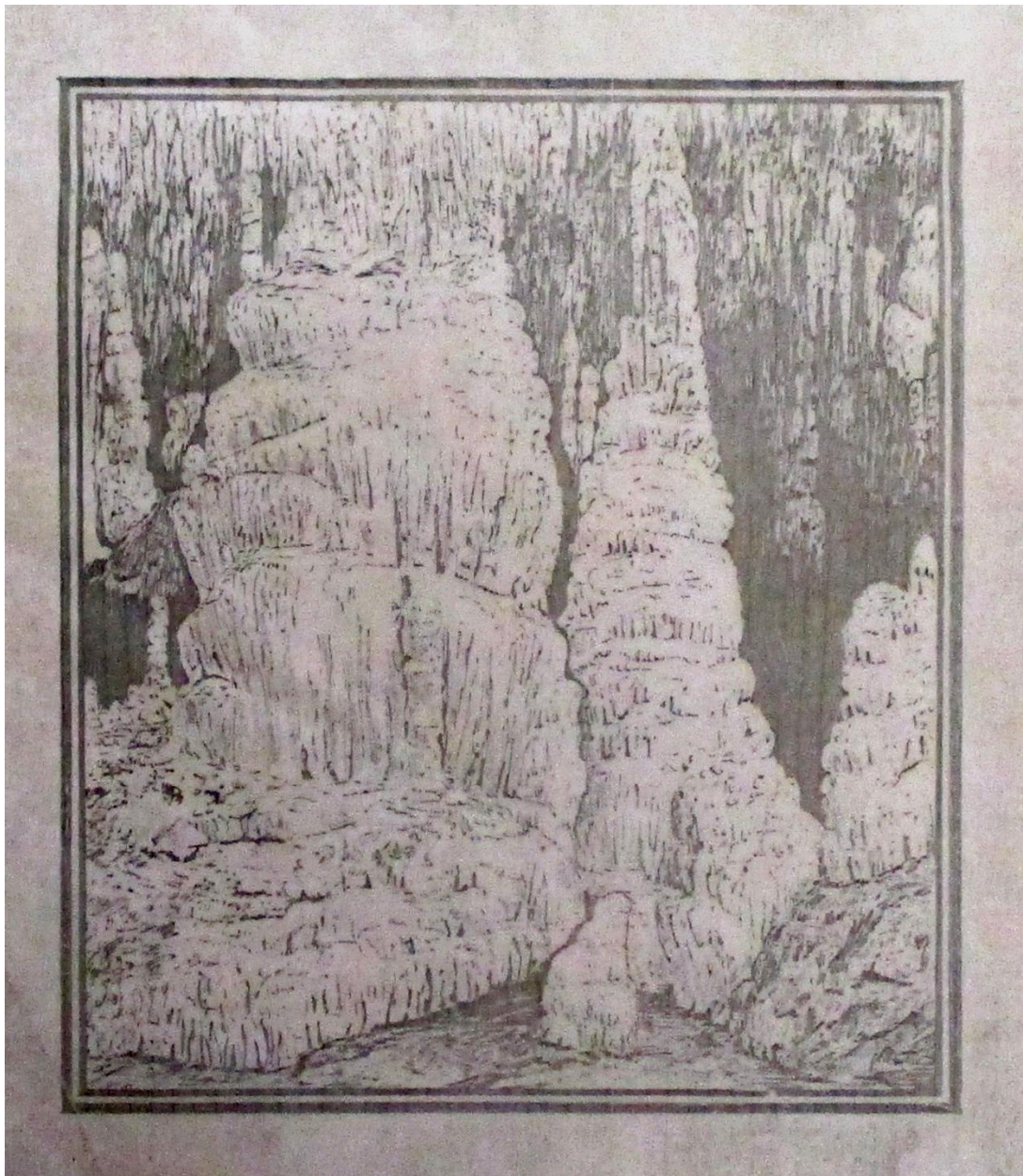
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Cave Detail from 1938 Plans for Morrison Caverns.

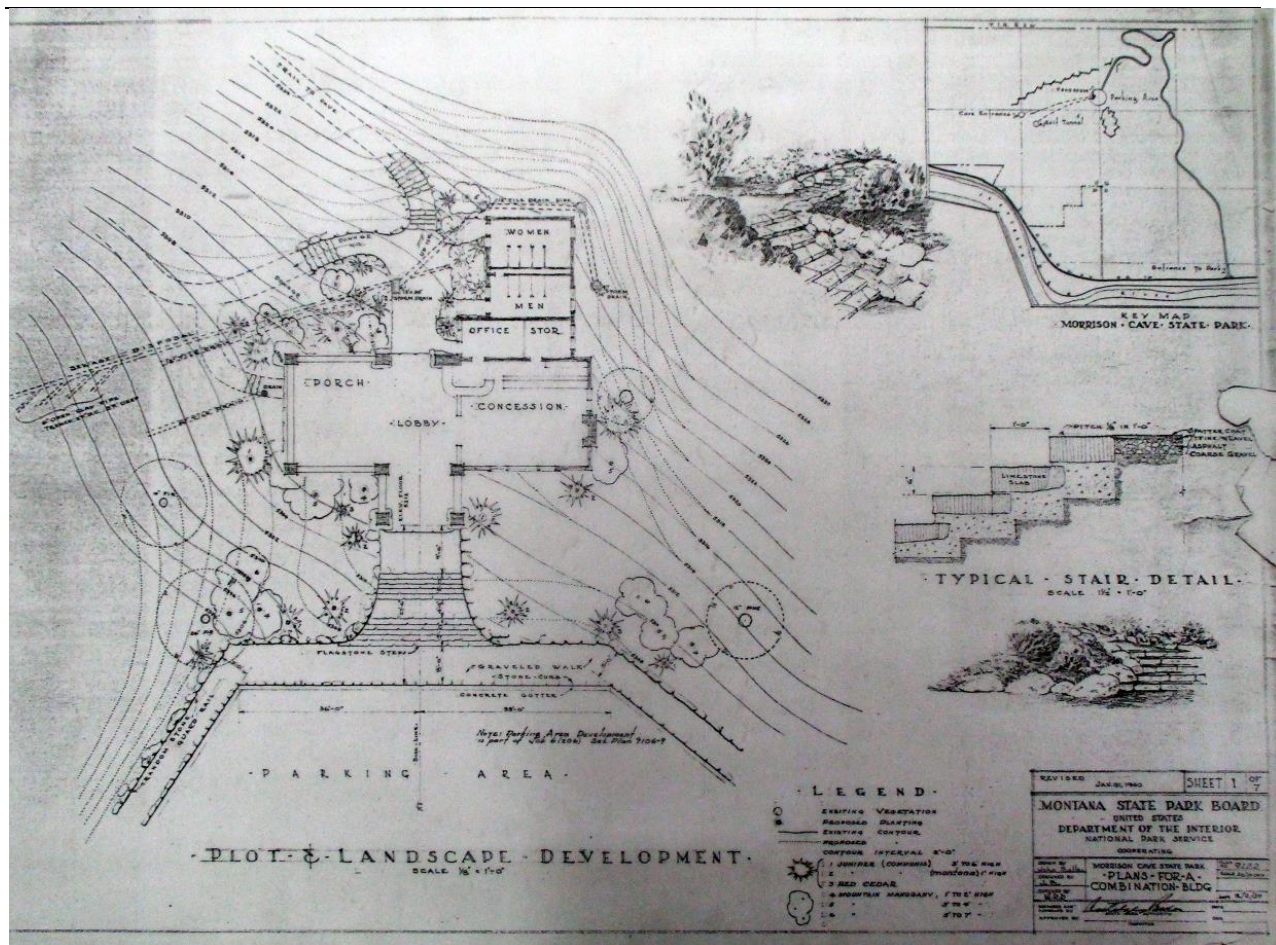
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Jefferson Co., Montana

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Original Plans for "A Combination Bldg" in Morrison Cave State Park, 1937, by Architect John Ballas.

Courtesy of Montana State Parks

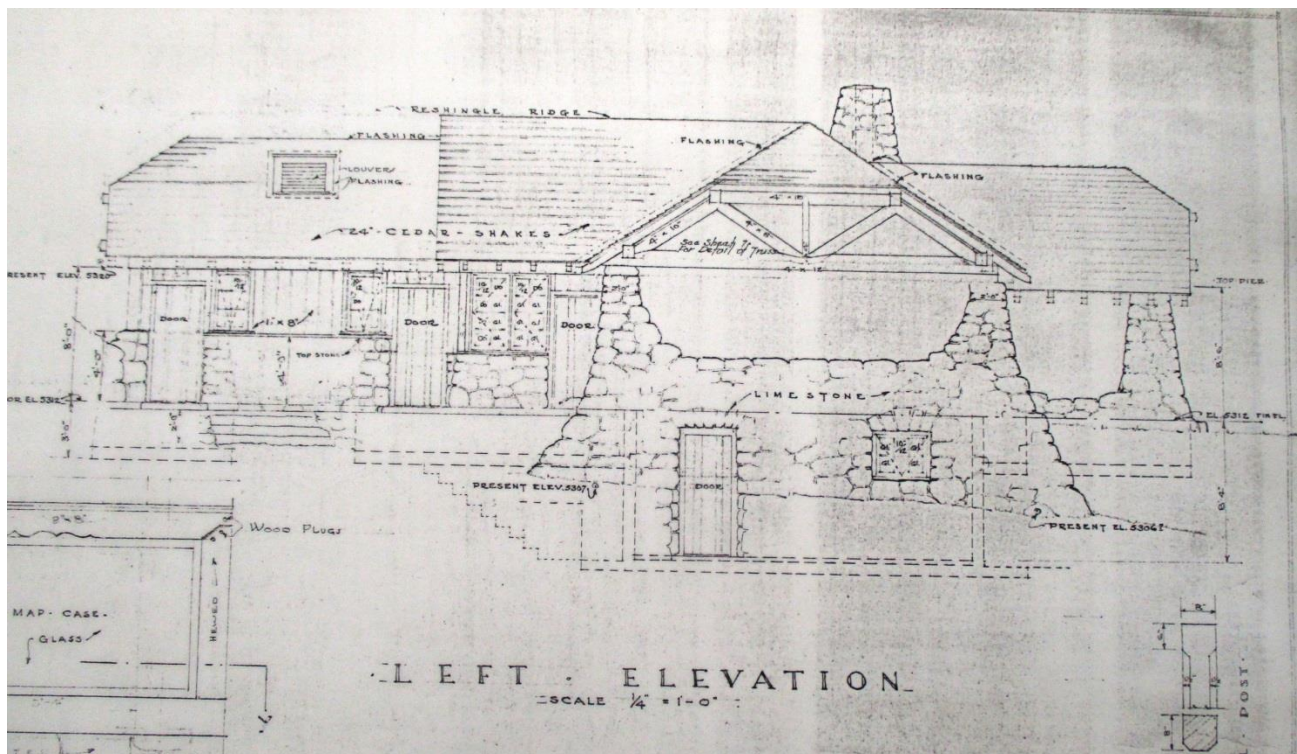
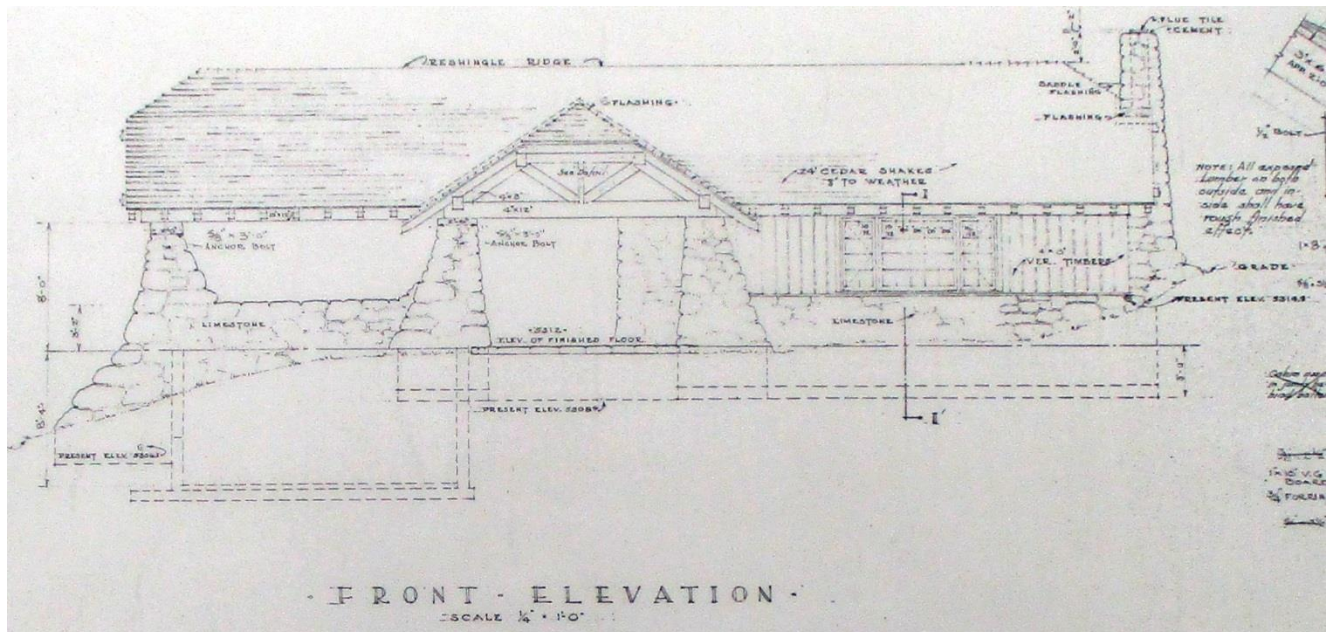
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**Original Plans for "A Combination Bldg" in Morrison Cave State Park, 1937, by Architect John Ballas.
Courtesy of Montana State Parks**

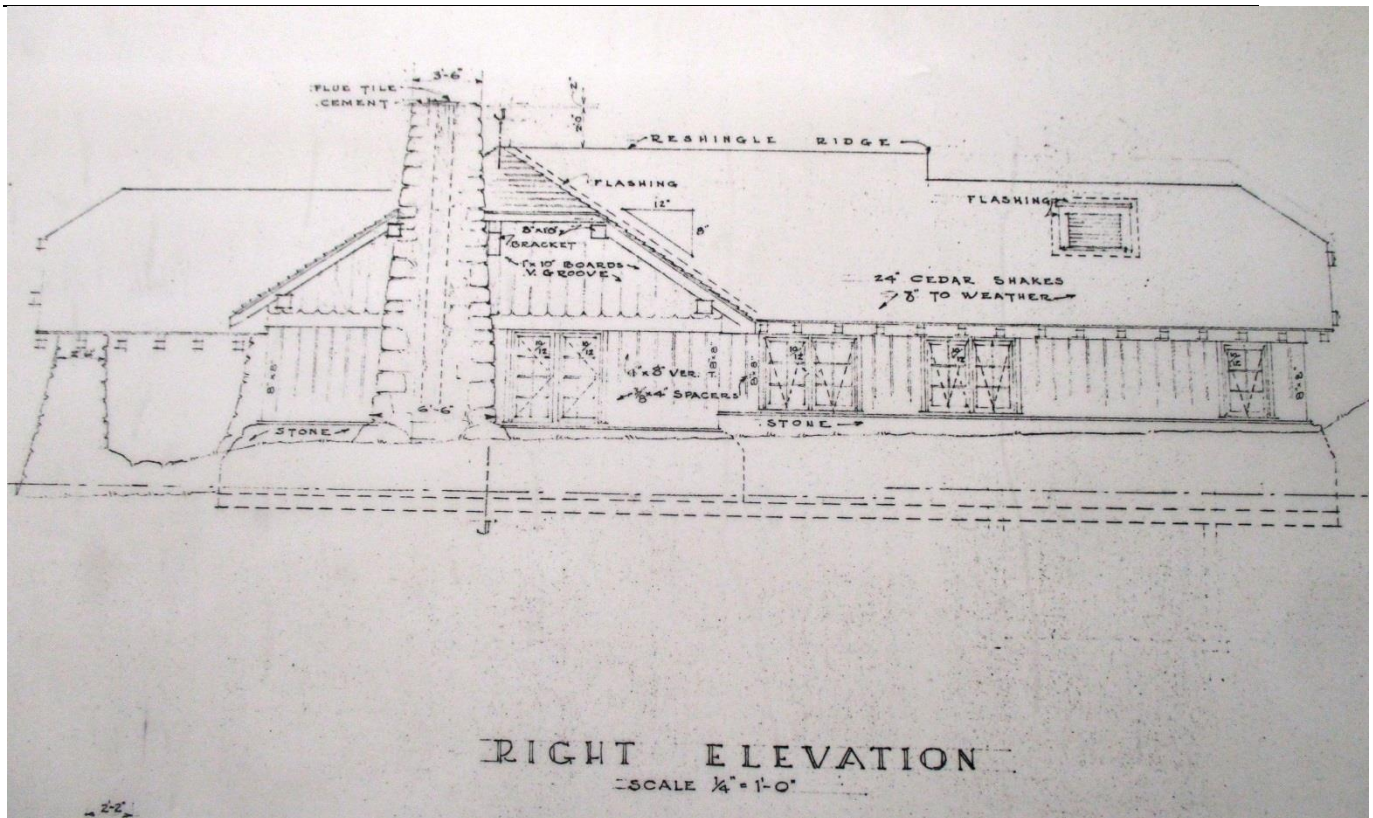
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Jefferson Co., Montana

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Original Plans for "A Combination Bldg" in Morrison Cave State Park, 1937, by Architect John Ballas.
Courtesy of Montana State Parks

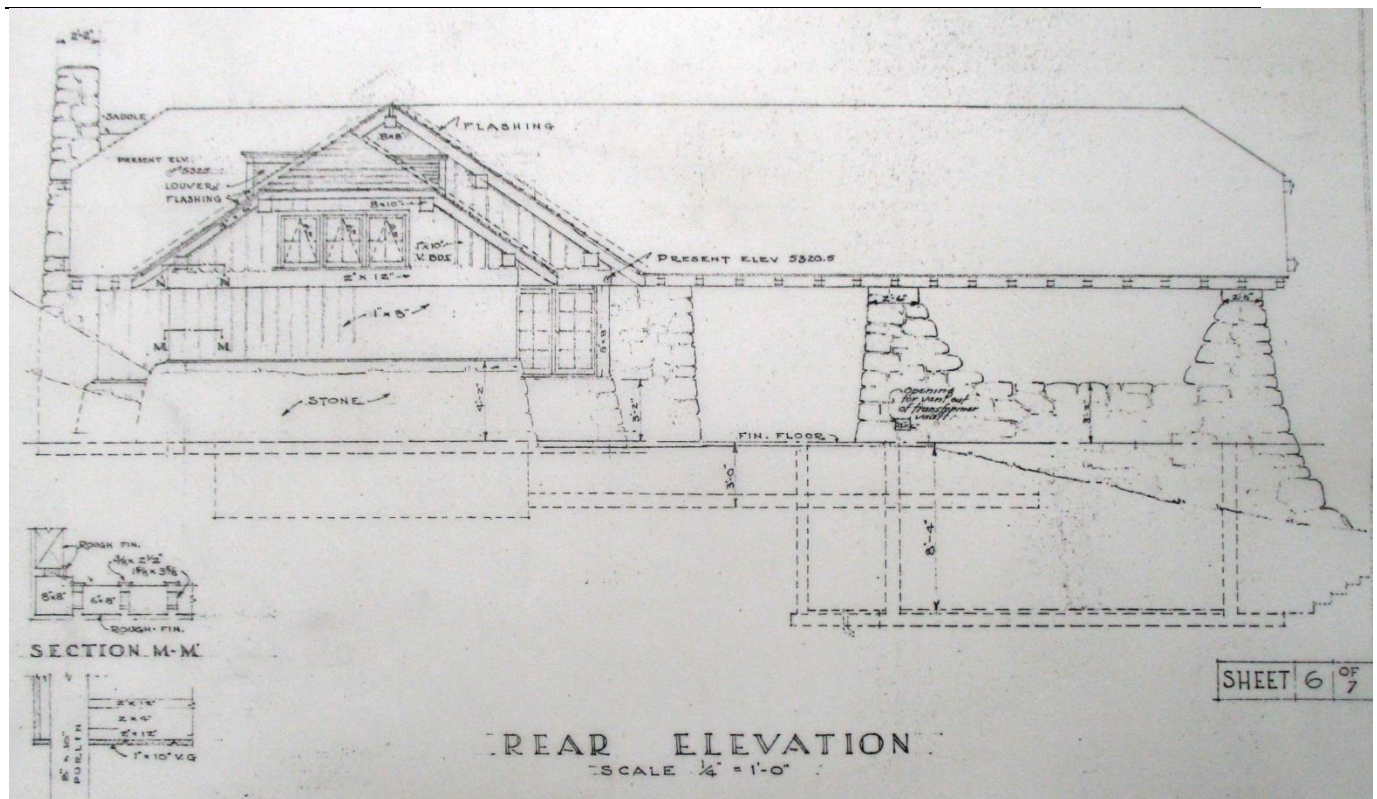
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Original Plans for "A Combination Bldg" in Morrison Cave State Park, 1937, by Architect John Ballas.

Courtesy of Montana State Parks

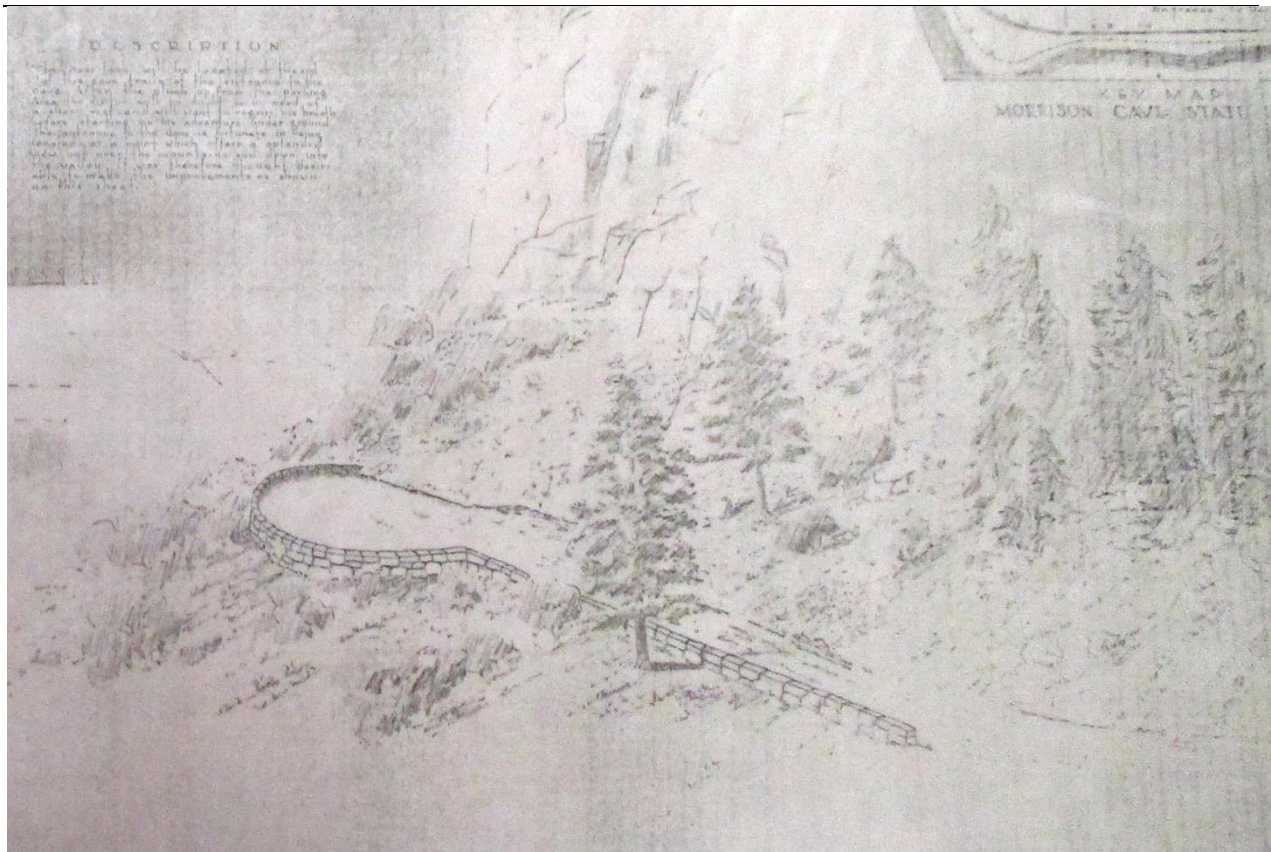
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Jefferson Co., Montana

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Original Detail of the Observation Point at entrance to Morrison Cave State Park, 1937, by Architect John Ballas.

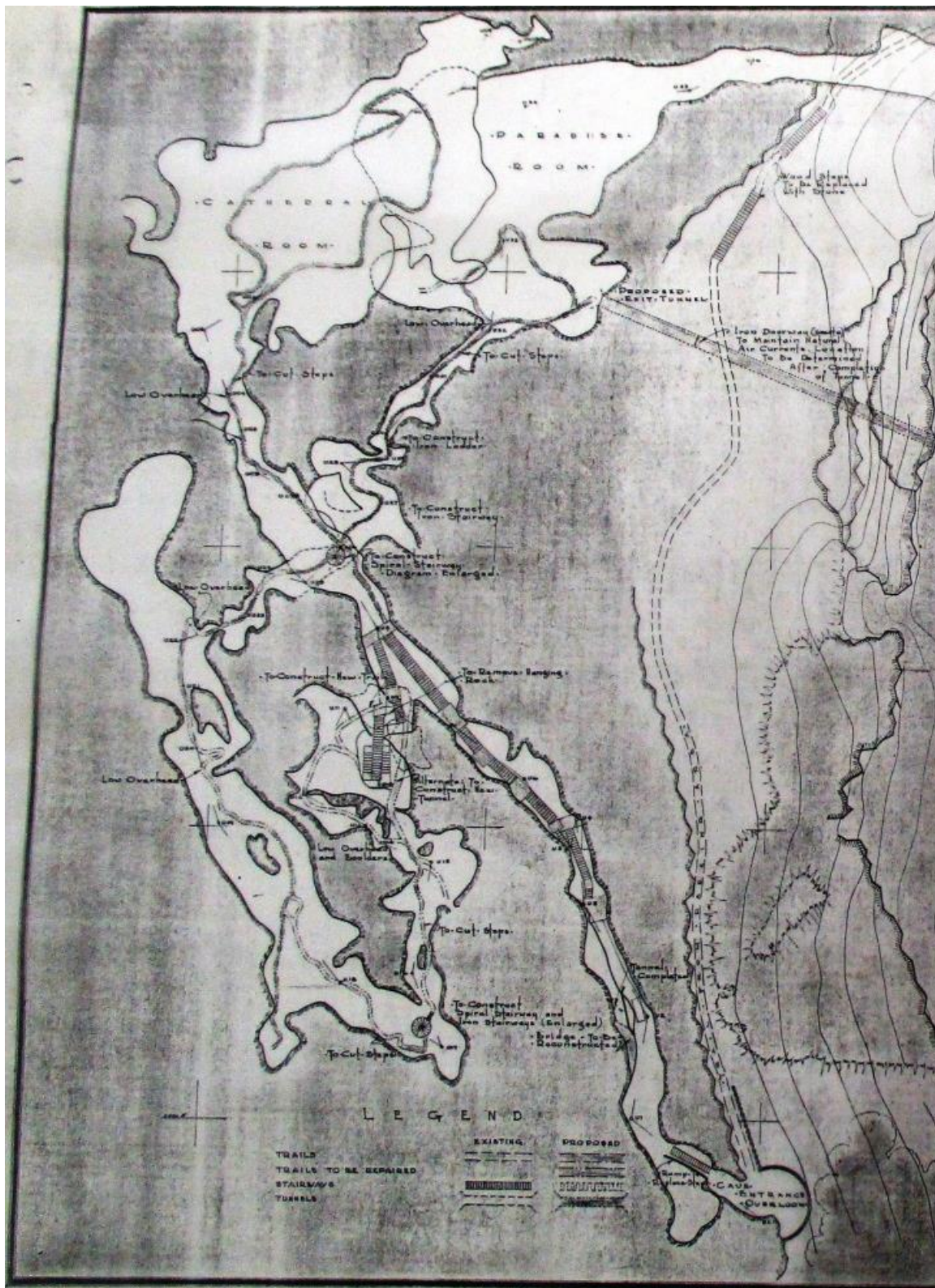
Courtesy of Montana State Parks

National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Jefferson Co., Montana

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Cave Development Plan (Detail), from The Master Plan for Morrison Cave, 1937.

Courtesy of Montana State Parks

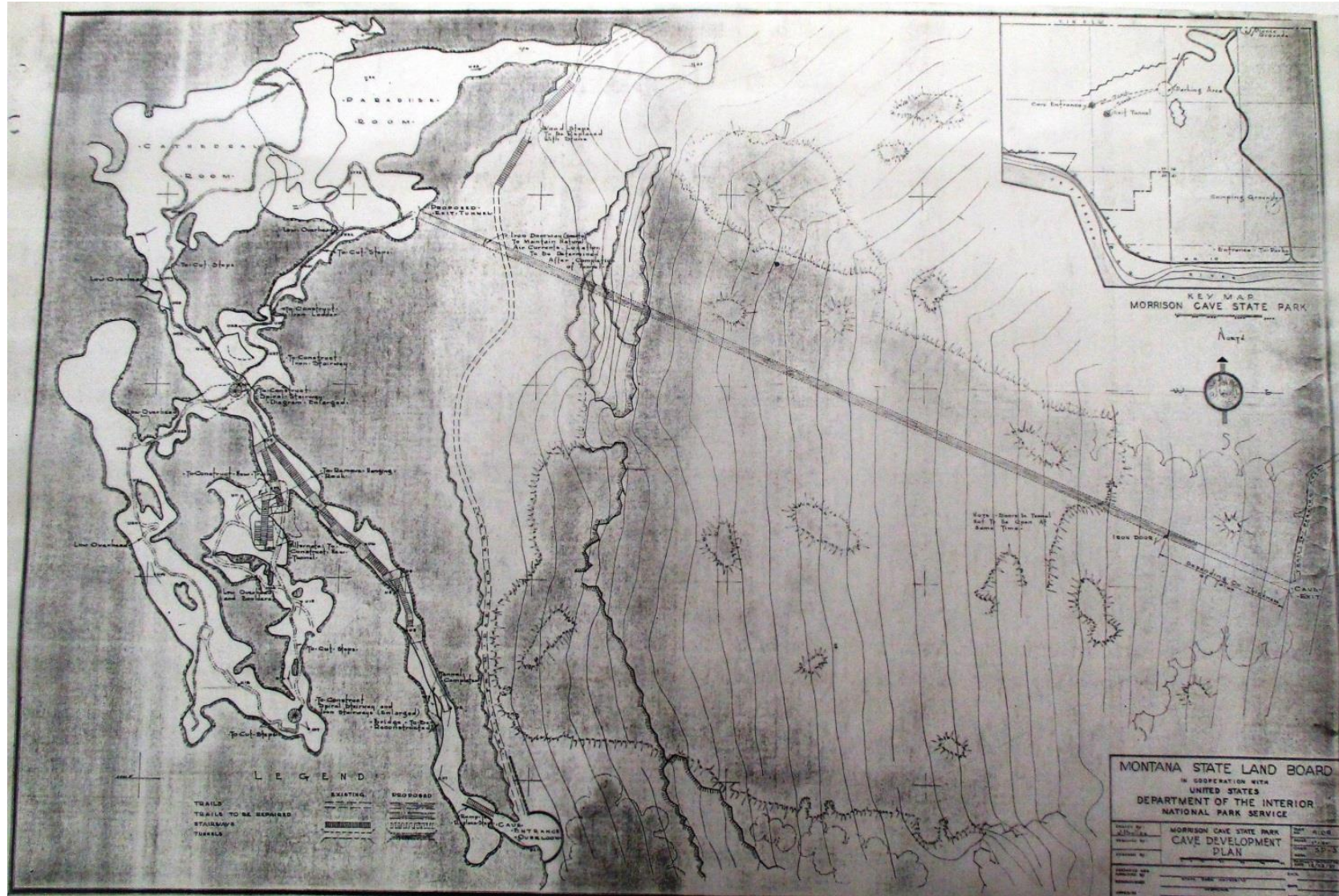
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Cave Development Plan, from The Master Plan for Morrison Cave, 1937. Courtesy of Montana State Parks

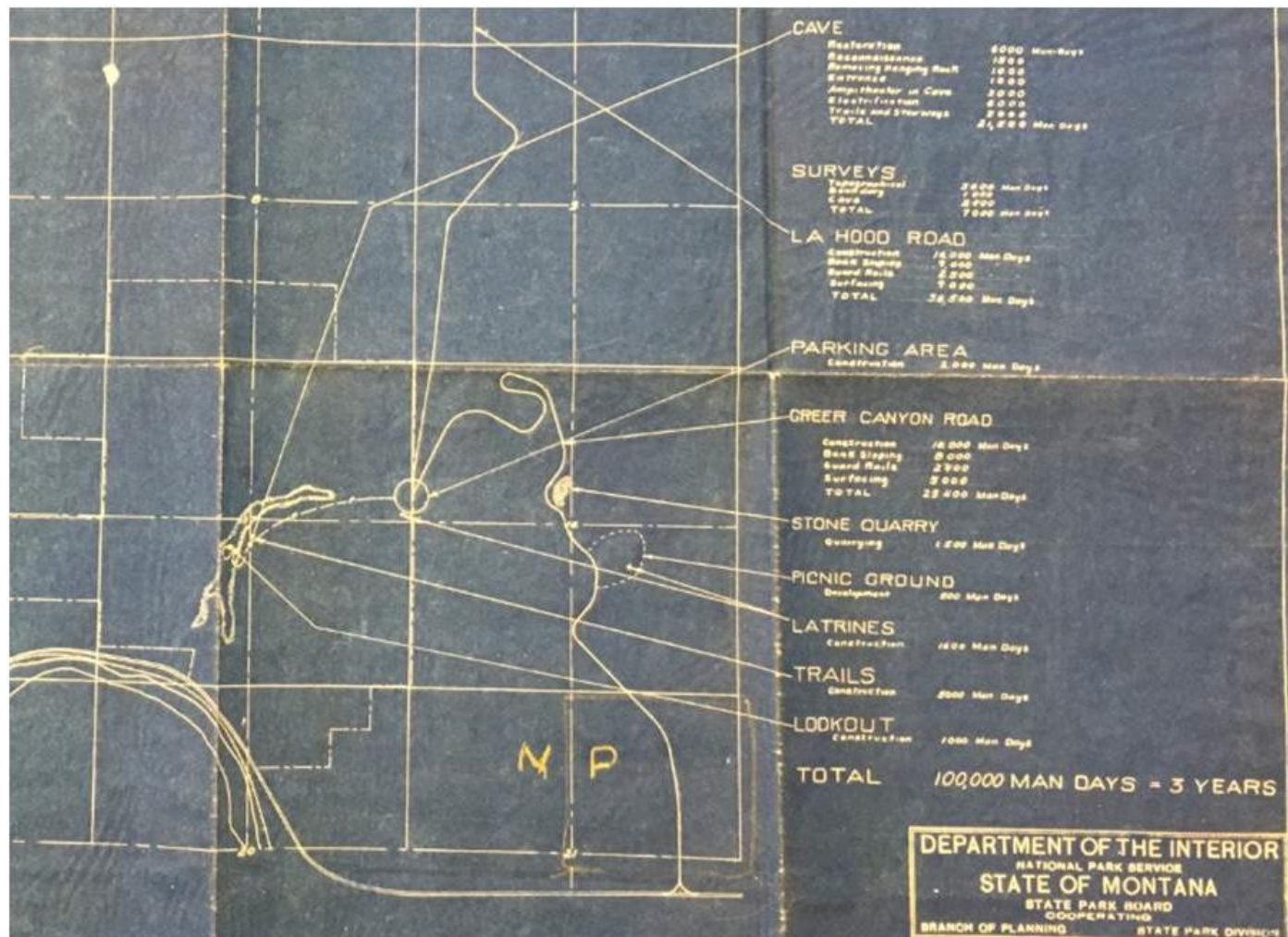
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Morrison Cave State Park CCC Improvement Plan, March 1935. Courtesy Montana State Parks

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Historic Photographs

Unless otherwise noted, historic photographs reproduced in this nomination are held in the collections of Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park. They include work by N.A. Forsyth, Butte photographer who photographed Morrison Cave between 1902 and 1911, as well as images by unidentified photographers donated to the park over the years.



"Lunch Time in Morrison Cave," ca. 1912, photograph by N.A. Forsyth, Butte, from the collections of the Montana Historical Society, Helena.

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National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

Name of Property

Jefferson Co., Montana

County and State

National Register Photographs

Name of Property: Lewis & Clark Caverns Historic District

City or Vicinity: LaHood vicinity

County: Jefferson County

State: Montana

Photographer: Chere Jiusto

Date Photographed: as noted (all taken November 9, 2016 and May 26, 2017)



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0001: Entrance to Feature 1: Lewis and Clark Caverns, looking north.

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National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0002: Overlook at Entrance to Lewis and Clark Caverns, looking west.



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0003: End of Lower Trail to Caverns, looking west.

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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0004: Stone steps on Upper Trail, looking west.

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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0005: Above: Stopping bench along Upper Trail, view to west.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0006: Below: Feature 14, Maintenance Shed along Lower Trail, view to west.



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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0007: Below: Feature 3, switchback in upper trail as it approaches caverns, looking northeast.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0008: Below: Feature 4, Lower Trail leading back to Parking Area, looking east.



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National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0009: Feature 6, Lewis and Clark Caverns Headquarters Building Entrance, looking northwest.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0010: Feature 6, Lewis and Clark Caverns Headquarters Building Entrance, looking west.



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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0011: Feature 6, Lewis and Clark Caverns Headquarters Building, looking southeast.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0012: Feature 6: Lewis and Clark Caverns Headquarters Building, looking east.



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Jefferson Co., Montana

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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0013: Feature 6, Interior of Headquarters through entrance, with original furnishings, fireplace, open trusses.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0014: Feature 6, Headquarters interior with historic furnishings, looking west through the entrance doors to patio, and ticket window.



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National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0015: Feature 7, Concessions Building, looking to the southeast.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0016: Feature 7, Concessions Building: Fountain Sign, interior.



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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0017: Above: Feature 7, Concessions Bldg, snack bar.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0018: Below: Feature 7, Concessions Bldg, gift shop.



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National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

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Jefferson Co., Montana

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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0019: Feature 7, Concessions Building, rear elevation looking to the southwest.



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0020: Feature 10, Culvert, looking east.

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Jefferson Co., MontanaCounty and State



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0021: Feature 10, Culvert, looking west.



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0022: Feature 11 Culvert, looking northwest.

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Jefferson Co., MontanaCounty and State



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0023: Feature 11 Culvert, looking southeast.



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0024: Feature 12, Lower Culvert, looking east.

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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0025: Feature 12, Lower Culvert, looking west.

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Jefferson Co., Montana

County and State



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0026: Above, Observation Point Overlook, looking east.

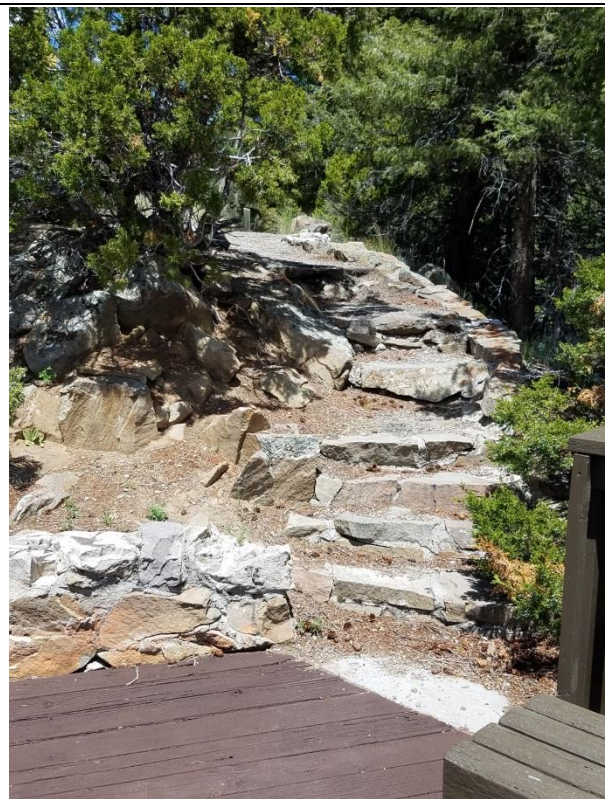
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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0027: Above Left: Feature 2, Walkway and Observation Point Overlook, looking south.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0028: Above Right: Feature 2, Stairs to Observation Point Overlook, looking north.

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Name of Property

Jefferson Co., MontanaCounty and State



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0029: Above: Feature 9, Granite Arch Bridge, looking to the east.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0030: Above: Feature 9, Granite Arch Bridge, detail looking to the east.



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Name of Property

Jefferson Co., MontanaCounty and State



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0031: Above: Feature 9, Stonework inside Granite Bridge barrel vault.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0032: Below: Feature 5, Tram Operations Building below caverns entrance, looking southwest.



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Jefferson Co., MontanaCounty and State



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0033: Above: Feature 15, Beginning of CCC Roadway, looking north up Greer Gulch.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0034: Below: Feature 15, Curve in the L&C Caverns Road, Parking area at top in background, looking southeast.



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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0035: Above: Feature 13, Picnic Area, looking east.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0036: Below: Feature 8, Latrine in Picnic Area, looking northeast.



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Jefferson Co., Montana

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MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0037: Above Feature 16 Maintenance Shop, looking southeast.

MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0038: Below, Feature 17 Water Pump House, looking west.



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National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration FormLewis and Clark Caverns Historic District

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Jefferson Co., Montana

County and State



MT_JeffersonCounty_Lewis&ClarkCavernsHD_0039: 2010 Visitor Center, looking northwest. Photo courtesy C. Van West. (Outside of NR Boundary).